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the 1990s, the number of people with a mental health problem has increased by 50% (Mental Health Foundation 1999). The prevalence of mental health problems has increased in the general population, and the incidence of mental health problems has increased in the prison population.

There is a growing awareness of the need to address the mental health needs of prisoners. The Department of Health (1999) has published a strategy for mental health services, which includes a commitment to improve the mental health of prisoners. The Department of Health (1999) has also published a strategy for mental health services, which includes a commitment to improve the mental health of prisoners. The Department of Health (1999) has also published a strategy for mental health services, which includes a commitment to improve the mental health of prisoners.

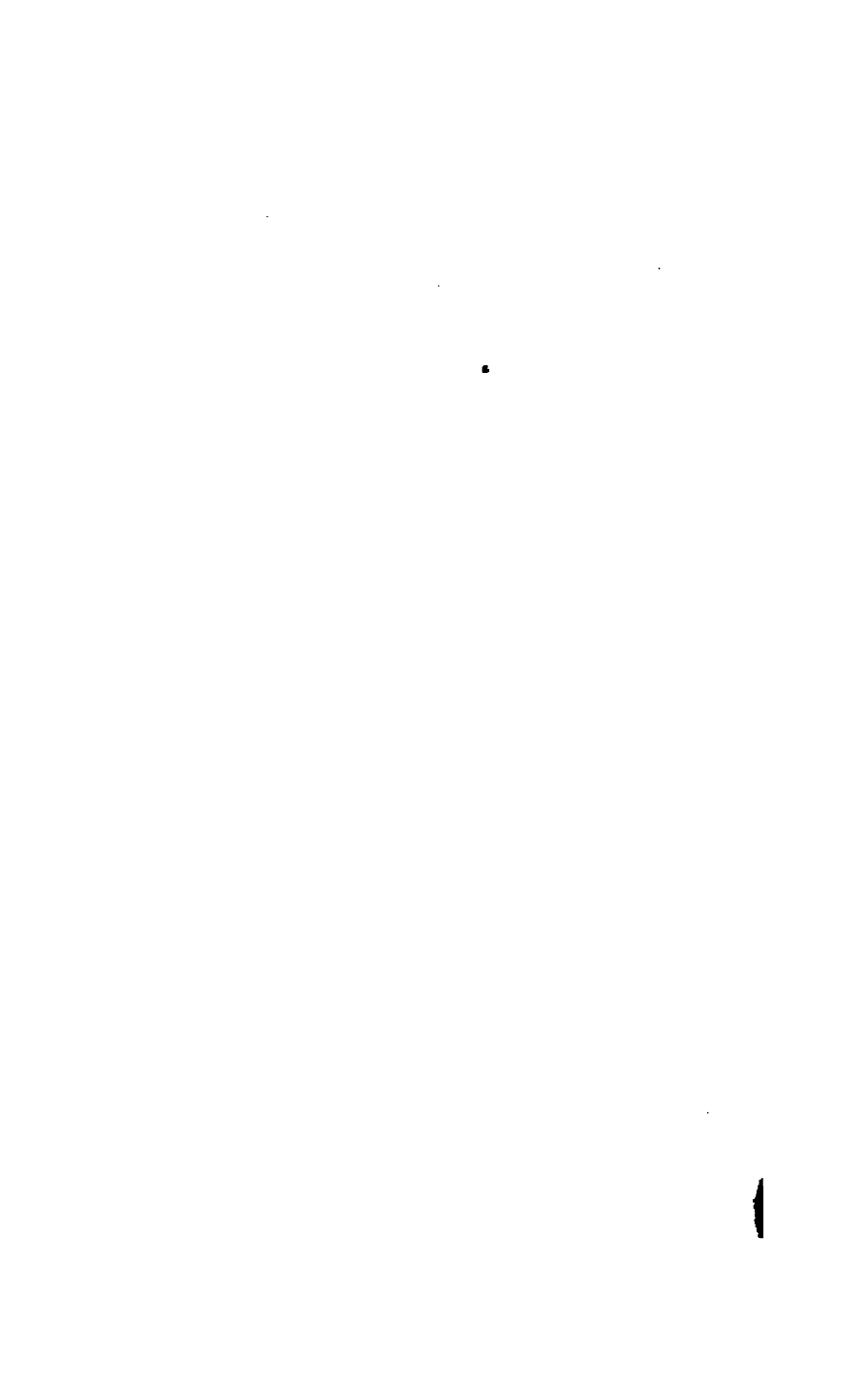
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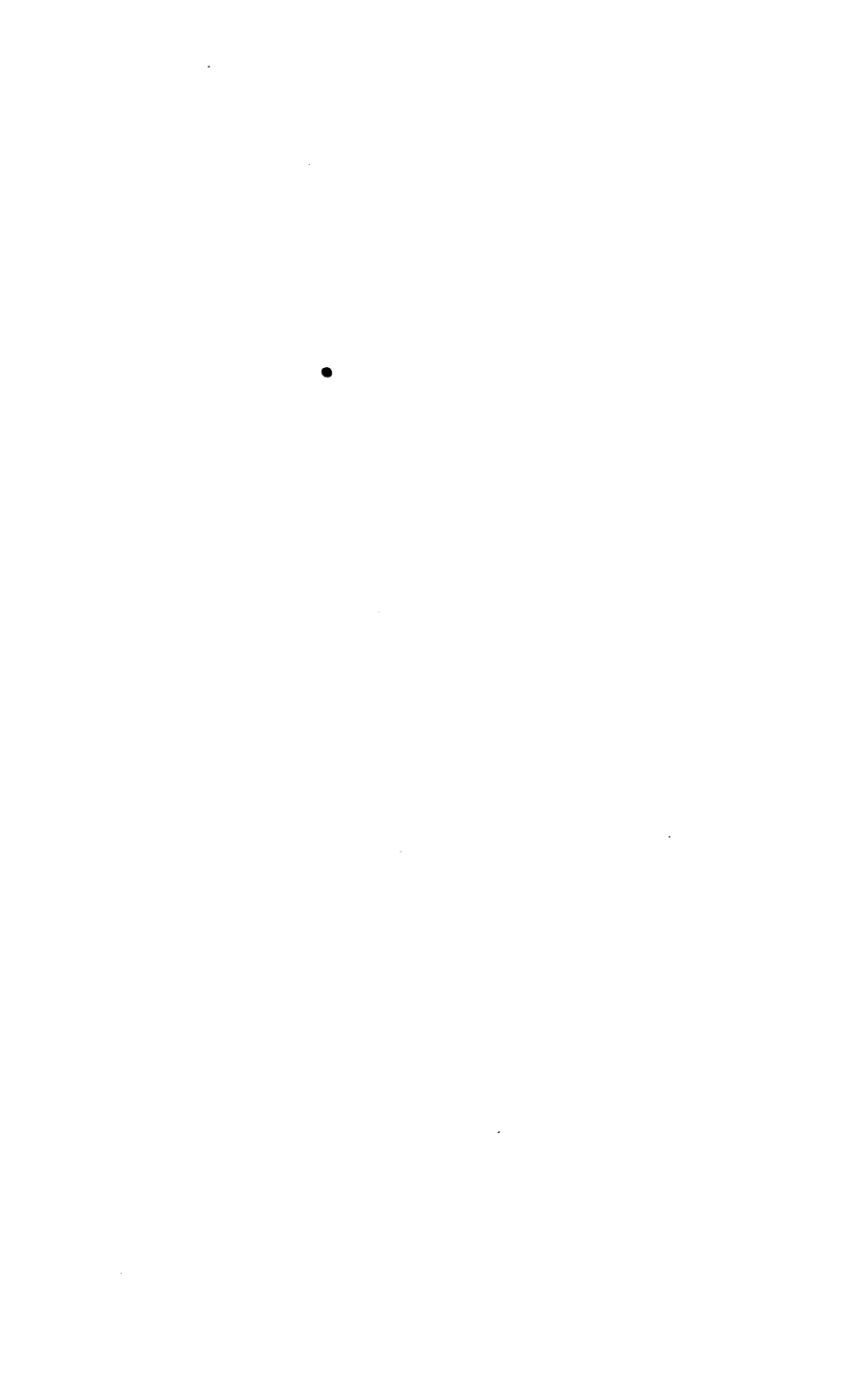
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THE
SPIRITUAL BODY

LONDON: PRINTED BY
SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE
AND PARLIAMENT STREET

THE
SPIRITUAL BODY

*The biggest lie ever told - John - Arcane
Greek - America*

An Essay in Prose and Verse

BY

JOHN CHARLES EARLE, B.A.

'What are the laws of nature? To me, perhaps, the rising of one from the dead were no violation of these laws, but a confirmation; were some far deeper law, now first penetrated into, and by spiritual force, even as the rest have all been, brought to bear on us with its material force'—*Sartor Resartus*, iii. 8

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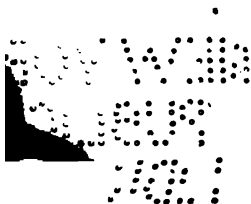
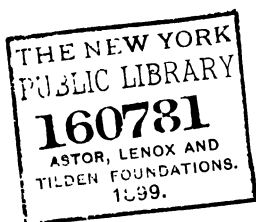
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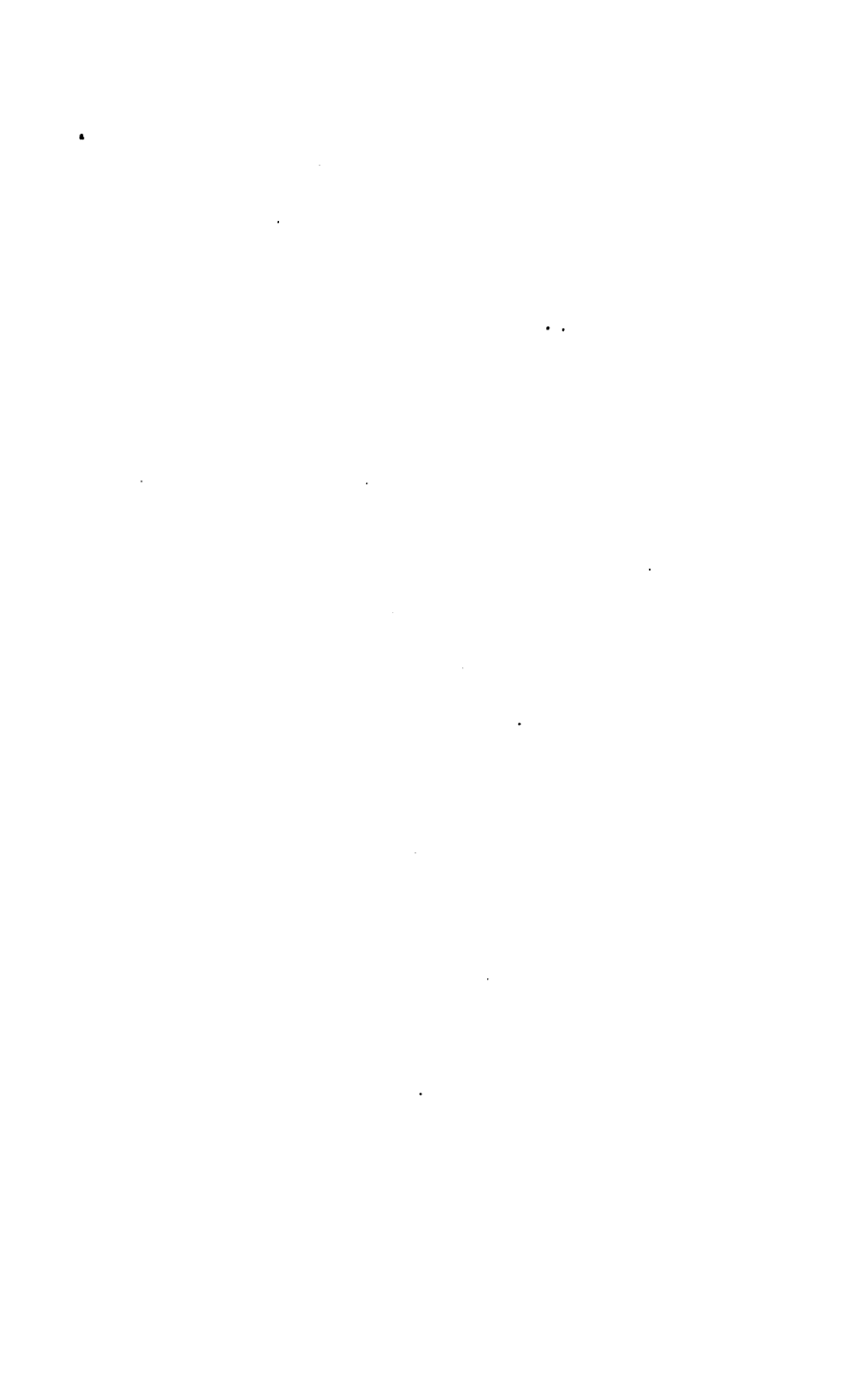
Cardinal de Luca, prefect of the Congregation of the
has published a decree condemning & prohibiting
perusal of the Spiritual Body and the Forty Day
Manbhamles Earle, London 1876."

TIMES. May 2. 1878.

In notices of these books see The Martin Field - at
the end.

No proposition has been selected for censure, and
any official information of the fact of the indexing is
received by the author from any quarter whatsoever
July 10. 1878.

Feb 17/38
Resurrection is the biggest
ever told -
John - Arcadian
- American



FEB- 17 / 38

Resurrection?

The - biggest - lie ever told

John Arcadian
GREEK - American

NOTE.

THE FOLLOWING ESSAY was printed by the Author in the early part of 1876 and circulated chiefly among private friends. Being afterwards published, he was encouraged by the result to enlarge it considerably, so that it can now scarcely be regarded as the same work. The prose part is nearly trebled in length, and he has added some minor poems on the same subject as the Essay, a few of which have already appeared in print.

October 1876.



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THE SPIRITUAL BODY.

PREFACE.

CHAPTER I.

THE belief in the immortality of the soul is closely bound up with that of the Spiritual Body ; for it is impossible—to the writer at least it appears impossible—to believe in the separate existence of the soul without a form and an organism. For what does soul imply ? Thoughts and feelings, trains of thought, states of feeling. And how can these trains of thought and states of feeling be maintained in existence, be carried on, modified, deepened, exalted, refined, expanded, without a mechanism of some kind analogous to that which we now enjoy ? Hence we find that all writers, inspired or uninspired, the moment they begin to speak of the separated spirit adopt involuntarily language which implies form and organism. The soul can no more exist after death than it could before death without a medium through which it may receive and communicate impressions. There is not a more baseless vision of the imagination than

a created spirit without body, without anything to sever it from the rest of the universe and give it individuality and personality.

Eternal form must still divide
The eternal soul from all beside.

If we accept the immortality of the soul, we are logically bound to accept also the immortality of the body under altered conditions. The very name of spirit includes the idea of body, for what is the *pneuma* which we breathe and on which all the phenomena of life, animal and vegetable, depend? Is it not a body, though an invisible one? Is it not as much a body as the hardest rock? Does it not constitute the chief part of our nourishment and of the food we eat exclusive of the air we inhale? Let us not be the slaves of words without ideas. If our *pneuma* is to survive death, it can do so in no other way than that which the Scripture points out—by retaining its pneumatic, or spiritual, body. And let those who are inclined to censure or ridicule this view of the subject remember that whatever weapon strikes the spiritual body stabs also the immortality of the soul. If we dote and dream in expecting the one, we dote and dream no less in looking for the other. How can the communion of saints be realised if we discredit the spiritual body? What relations can we have with a spirit who is *nowhere* and nobody? And of what avail would it be to invoke those who cannot hear, and have no organism by which to receive impressions from without? A spirit without a body would be the counterpart of Undine, a body without a soul.

Both belong to the region of romance. The moment you localise a spirit you endow that spirit with a spiritual body. Place implies form : whatever occupies the one is possessed of the other. We shall find ourselves after death, as before, in a locality. We need no miracle for the change. Our resurrection will not be miraculous in the ordinary sense any more than our birth was, but, on the contrary, perfectly natural, simple, and easy. The great iron gate will open before us, angel-led, of its own accord. We shall pass, and not for the first time, from death unto life, and, though the change will be wonderful, it will not be more wonderful than preceding steps which we have taken in the march of existence. We have a type of it in our awaking at dawn ; and this figure is the more exact when we remember that we do not awake and rise in the same body as that in which we lay down. It is the same in one sense but not in another. It is the same by continuity, but it is not the same by absolute physical identity. Every part of it has undergone a change. Brain tissue especially is repaired, to be wasted again during the day with every thought we think and every sensation we feel.

The researches of modern science have latterly forced the doctrine of the Spiritual Body more and more on the attention of all who believe in the resurrection ; and it is to these in general, by whatever name they may be called, that I venture to address the following remarks. The impossibility of the resurrection of the natural body at the last day

according to popular notions is apparent when we consider that few men in comparison with the entire human race will then be in their graves. Many of our species have never been buried in the earth; many lie in the depths of the sea; many have been burnt, many devoured by wild beasts and cannibals. All the dead after a short space of time become not merely dust but vapour. They enter into other forms, either with or without chemical decomposition, and become the aliment of other living creatures, plants, animals, and men. The dead are the life of the living. We inhale the dead at every breath, and, in this respect, we are all always cannibals—we are nourished by the flesh of our brethren. They flow in our veins; they help to form the texture of our bodies and our brain-cells. They could not be reclaimed for individuals at the last day without taking from numberless bodies of which they have formed part. Their condition has become atmospheric. They are the property of all. They have no atomic integrity, and never can be reconstituted in their natural conditions. We must therefore put aside their remains altogether as having part in the resurrection to life at Christ's coming. It is not to be thought of that millions should then be laying claim to the very same particles of matter, and still less that the same particles could belong at the same time and in the same sense to millions of different persons. When we say that God can do all things, we do not mean that He can work impossibilities. The resurrection of the body, except under the conditions to be

pointed out, is not a truth, but a ghastly and gibbering skeleton of one.

I am here speaking of the vast majority of mankind, not of those few who will be in the sepulchres when our Lord shall come again. Of these nothing is predicated in this place, though I shall have something to say about them by-and-by.

It is difficult in the present state of scientific observation to realise the unreflecting way in which many of us spoke and thought of the bodily remains of the departed in our earlier years. Thus, to take one instance of a thousand from the divines of the old school, Pearson, on the Creed, art. The Resurrection of the Body, says: 'He which numbereth the sands of the sea, knoweth all the scattered bones, seeth into all the graves and tombs, searcheth all the repositories and dormitories in the earth, knoweth *what dust belongeth to each body, what body to each soul.*'

But the bodies of the dead do not, after a certain time, exist at all as dust. They are resolved into gases, which are breathed by all. No individual souls could lay claim to individual particles, which multitudes of living beings have appropriated, and chemistry has decomposed and recomposed countless times. Dr. Pearson here only darkens counsel by words without knowledge. His imagination could have supplied ample material to the painters of the Middle Ages, who loved to represent the horrors of the resurrection in their pictures of the Last Judgment. He reminds us of Ruskin's account of one of

the masterpieces of Tintoretto in the church of the Madonna del Orto in Venice.

‘Bat-like out of the holes and caverns and shadows of the earth, the bones gather and the clay heaps heave, rattling and adhering into half-kneaded anatomies, that crawl and startle and struggle up among the putrid weeds, with the clay clinging to their clotted hair, and their heavy eyes sealed by the earth darkness yet, like his of old who went his way unseeing to the Siloam pool; shaking off one by one the dreams of the prison-house, hardly hearing the clangour of the trumpets of the armies of God, blinded yet more, as they awake, by the white light of the new heaven, until the great vortex of the four winds bear up their bodies to the judgment seat; the firmament is all full of them, a very dust of human souls, that drifts, and floats, and falls in the interminable, inevitable light; the light clouds are darkened with them as with thick snow, currents of atom life in the arteries of heaven, now soaring up slowly, and higher and higher still, till the eye and the thought can follow no further, borne up, wingless, by their inward faith and by the angel powers invisible, now hurled in countless drifts of horror before the breath of their condemnation.’¹

The language of President Davies on the subject of the resurrection is precisely similar.²

But the confusion here described is nothing com-

¹ *Modern Painters*, ii. 172.

² See *Theories of the Resurrection*, by Rev. J. C. Stockbridge, D.D.

pared with what would occur if nature should attempt to restore at the last the bodies of all mankind to their atomic integrity.

There is a story told by Bernoni of a parish priest of St. Marcuola in Venice, who was dragged out of bed and soundly kicked and cuffed by all the corpses buried in his church, because he had declared in his sermons his disbelief in ghosts, and had dared to say : 'Where the dead are, there they stay.' The honest *padre* was right as to the natural bodies of the dead ; where *they* are, there they stay.

Nam mea quid poterunt ossa minuta loqui ?¹

But he was not right as regards their spiritual bodies, which never were in the grave, which may and do sometimes—whatever he might think of it—reappear on earth, and which will come again (or 'rise') hereafter at the end of this dispensation.

CHAPTER II.

THE common idea of the resurrection is attended with another difficulty. It seems to take for granted that from the time of death to the judgment day the soul will exist apart in an incorporeal, unorganised, condition. But this solution of continuity in the connection of soul and body during a period which may, for all we know, last many hundreds of thou-

¹ Propert. *Eleg.* lib. II. xiii.



sands of years, is disquieting to contemplate and difficult to believe. It outrages the axiom *nihil per saltum*. It cannot be made to harmonise with Scripture without doing violence to a large number of texts ; and it suggests in the strongest manner the necessity of seeking for some more probable solution of the problem of our after life.

We have not far to seek : the inspired Apostle Paul himself reveals the mystery. He assures us that there is even now a natural body and a spiritual body, and he refers us to the seed cast into the ground as the lively image of death and the resurrection. But in the seed there are two parts, and of these one dies in order to supply nourishment to the other. The tiny germ that exists in every seed swells with the moisture of the ground, and the perisperm, or cotyledon, which surrounds it, is but a storehouse of nourishment to enable it to grow, till, having sent its root downwards and its plumule upwards, it can draw its support from the soil and the atmosphere. But to accomplish this the perisperm must die, for it cannot pass into the tissues of the plant until it has been reduced to a soluble and then a liquid state.¹ In one of the parts, therefore, the seed dies ; in the other it lives. It is thus with man. His natural body perishes, and when it lies cold on the bed of death—when it has itself become a grave—the vital germ—the spiritual body—rises out of it and passes into a sphere of existence suited to its antecedents. Our Lord Him-

¹ *Primeval Man Unveiled*, pp. 301-2.

self used the same simile in reference to His own resurrection when He said: 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, itself remaineth alone. But if it die it bringeth forth much fruit' (St. John xii. 24). And this it is which makes the Apostle's meaning clear when he declared emphatically, in answer to the captious objector: 'Senseless man, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die first, and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, as of wheat or of some other grain; but God giveth it a body as He hath willed (that is, according to a natural law), and to every seed his own body' (1 Cor. xv. 36-38). No two spiritual bodies will be exactly alike: each will preserve the individuality which marked the natural body, and distinguished it from all its fellows. In the resurrection of the dead, the natural body is sown in corruption and the spiritual body is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonour, it is, not it shall be, raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body (1 Cor. xv. 42-44). The Apostle employs the present tense, for if the spirit-body were not in us now, at least in its inchoate or embryo condition, the present and the future body—the mortal and the resurrection body—could never be identical. The links which unite them would be dissolved by death and corruption, and nothing could restore them. From this argument there is no escape.

Perhaps it will be objected that if the doctrine here advocated were so plainly revealed in Scripture, Christians in general would not so long have remained in ignorance of it. But it will be evident on reflection that such an inference would be unwarranted. Time is necessary to develop many things contained in the primary deposit of the faith, and we can no more conclude anything against the spirit-body because for centuries the faithful have understood it differently, than we could with justice have rejected the Copernican system of astronomy because it was opposed to the ordinary interpretation of the Bible at the time when it was taught by the illustrious Tuscan. Astronomers had been satisfied with the Ptolemaic system for 1400 years.

In his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, St. Paul reverts to the subject on which he had dwelt so eloquently in the first. 'We know,' he says, 'that if our earthly house of this tabernacle (our natural body) be dissolved, we have a building of God (a spiritual body), a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this (natural body) we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation that is from heaven (our spiritual body): if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we also that are in this tabernacle (the natural body) do groan, being burthened: because we would not be unclothed but clothed upon, that what is mortal (the natural body) may be swallowed up by life (the spiritual body): therefore,' he adds, 'we are always confident, and have a good will rather to be absent

from the (natural) body, and to be present with the Lord (in our spiritual body) : for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive in the (spiritual) body according to the things he has done, whether good or evil (2 Cor. v. 1-10).

Thus far, then, our way is clear. St. Paul affirms the present existence in us of the spiritual body, which will clothe the spirit at the moment of death, and he refers us to the seed sown as a representation of what will happen to us in that momentous crisis. But elsewhere he refers to something besides of far greater importance as illustrating the doctrine of the resurrection. He tells us that as we have been planted together with Christ in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection. We are bound therefore to accept Christ's rising from the dead as the type of our own, and to examine the Divine records concerning it with the utmost reverence and care. He came to be the Redeemer not only of the soul but of the body likewise, and, though He paid the common penalty of death, He did not suffer death to triumph for one moment over His bodily existence. No sooner had He given up the ghost than the spirit-body was set free from its mortal surroundings and passed into the unseen world. In it He visited the spirits in prison ; in it He welcomed the penitent to His side in Paradise. But we who are of His mystical body shall in all things be made like unto Him who is our brother and the first begotten from the dead. Our spirit-bodies, when

liberated from the bondage of corruption, will pass straightway wheresoever He wills, and find not merely a state but a place also in which to realise a more intense existence.

CHAPTER III.

LET me here observe that the spirit-body of the saints, as of the Lord, preserves the continuity of the body which theology requires. The natural body is the 'terminus a quo' of the resurrection, and as the body in which Christ walked with the disciples to Emmaus, stood with them on the shore of the Lake of Galilee, led them out to the Mount of Olives and rose in their sight to heaven, was the same as that in which He sat by Jacob's well, instituted the Eucharist, and suffered on the cross, so will the resurrection body, which will invest us at the moment of death, be the same with that which we now tenant—the same, that is, and not the same; the same in substance but not in conditions; the same in one point of view but not the same in another; the same with a difference. It is only in this way that the words of the Fourth Lateran Council can be understood: 'Qui omnes (tam reprobi quam electi) cum suis propriis resurgent corporibus quæ nunc gestant.'¹ And here I would quote from a letter by a clerical friend who writes: 'Perrone says that we Catholics

¹ Denzinger, *Enchiridion*, 356.

agree in holding that we shall rise with a body physically identical with that which we had in life, "adeo ut omnes idem physicè corpus resumpturi simus quod per mortem amisimus;" but then he grants that for this it is not necessary that the future body should be composed of all and each of the particles of matter which compose the present body; but it is enough if it is composed of the essential parts, i.e. such as distinguished the body of one man from that of another.' Perrone, in this passage,¹ follows in the track of most modern theologians and especially of St. Thomas Aquinas, who admits that all which was in man, as regards totality of matter, will not rise again, and that, although the resurrection body will be numerically the same with the former body, its conditions will be altered. His ideas on the subject are very singular and little less extravagant than the supposed revelation of Ormuzd to Zoroaster, in which it is taught that the bodies of men, however they may be scattered over the world, will rise again by a process of drinking liqueurs that will take fifty-seven years for its full accomplishment. He holds, for example, that all will rise in the same age, namely that of youth, whether they died in infancy or old age. Amputated limbs will be restored; radical defects remedied. Dwarfs and giants will alike be brought to an average standard; but, although in their natural bodies, they will not be in the enjoyment of animal life nor discharge animal functions. Descending still further into particulars,

¹ *Prælectiones Theologicae*, vol. i. p. 619.

he says: 'The entrails in the body will rise like the rest of the members, and they will be full, not of foul superfluities, but of noble humours.'¹ The bodies of men will not rise till the end of the world, because they are subject to the 'heavenly bodies.' The stars must melt away before the spirit of man will recover its flesh. If this rule has been reversed in the case of some who have been raised from the dead at an earlier period, it was only by special privilege.

I should scarcely have thought it worth while to quote opinions so fanciful and grotesque, but that many persons refer to St. Thomas as an almost infallible authority on the subject of the resurrection. Happily we are able to maintain the identity of the present and future body without any such uncouth mediæval conjectures. The spiritual body being evolved in life from the natural body, must in a certain sense be materially identical with it, and it will carry away from it abundantly sufficient to establish that identity. The more weight, however, that may be attached to the views of St. Thomas, the more important it will be to remember that in treating of the matter he records various different opinions, and that he distinctly and repeatedly throws aside the idea of the absolute and entire physical identity of the risen body with the body laid low in death. Even with regard to the relative disposition of the corporeal parts he allows a latitude of opinion.

¹ See a letter in the *Pilot* of April 26, 1876, 'On the Spiritual Body,' by J. C. Earle, B.A. The passages in St. Thomas Aquinas here referred to are there given in full.

It is not necessary, he says, that all the particles should be brought back to their former places. It is probable that it will be so in the case of the essential organs, but not perhaps in the case of the accidental, as nails and hairs.¹ This is the language of one who is imperfectly aware of the fact that the interaction of the particles in the human body is so intimate that the displacement and alteration of any would break up the identity of all, for 'every organised being,' as Cuvier said, 'forms a whole and entire system. . . . None of its parts can change without a change of the others also.' It is language, moreover, which heated partisans of the resurrection of the same unaltered body should well ponder, lest, through a blind zeal for what they suppose to be the orthodox faith, they be found, as they certainly will be found, in direct opposition to the most authoritative of all mediæval divines. His incoherent statements are all that my opponents have to advance in the way of argument, and in commenting on him I am in effect answering them. He is on their side, inasmuch as he affirms that the natural body will rise again at the last day; and he is on my side in so far as he maintains that it will not rise again in all its particles, in the same age or stature or mode of life. His authority is brought forward by them as enough to bear down all opposition; yet his authority in fact saps the foundation of their fortress. A feeble and corrupt tradition is all on which they have to

¹ Sti. Thomæ Aquinatis *Summa Minor*, tom. v. p. 226, 232-4-5, 239, 240, 242, Parisiis, 1873.

rely ; and no ultimate authority ever will or can, in my opinion, attempt to enforce on mankind the belief that their bodies will rise again in their natural condition when St. Paul says they will not, or that they have not a spiritual body when St. Paul says they have, or that the dead will be raised corruptible when St. Paul says 'the dead shall be raised incorruptible.' I abide the result in perfect tranquillity. Facts are against them. Reason revolts. Science disdains the thought of disorganising millions of bodies to re-organise one. Chemistry laughs. Common sense is outraged. Revelation protests ; and Nature, with her myriad voices, cries 'No, no, no !'

Sir Kenelm Digby, like St. Thomas, believed in the *anima separata*, and he resorted to a singular expedient for removing all difficulties that might arise in the mind from the fact of a man and the cannibal who had eaten him having to 'rise again with the same bodys.'¹ This he does by laying down that 'the matter of anything, abstracted from the form, hath no determinate being, no individuation, is, in effect and actually nothing, but hath, or rather is, a capacity to be anything. It must not then be on the side of matter that we must look for the individuation and identification of our bodies after the resurrection.' It is the form of man, he adds, which is his soul, that remains the same after its separation from the body, and preserves the identity of the individual. 'What difficulty, then,

¹ *On the Vegetation of Plants.* Treatises. London, 1669.

is there to allow her to have *the same body she had in this world*, if she be built up again to a whole man, *out of the general magazine of matter*, which furnished her with a body before, and *which hath no this or that belonging to it, otherwise than as some form engrossing us, makes it be this or that body?*'

Thus, according to Sir Kenelm Digby, man will have in the resurrection the same natural body which he had in his lifetime, though it may be composed of entirely different materials. *Risum teneatis amici?*

My attention has been drawn by 'a Priest' in a controversial letter ('Westminster Gazette,' January 19, 1876) to a passage in the Abbé Le Noir's 'Dictionnaire des Harmonies de la Raison et de la Foi' (page 1467). 'L'Eglise,' he says, 'enseigne que tous les hommes ressusciteront, comme le Christ est ressuscité, c'est-à-dire, seront revêtus du corps dont la mort les avait dépouillés, bien que ce corps doive, après cette résurrection, être doué de propriétés différentes de celles sous lesquelles il se présente dans cette vie.' Now this passage accords with many others to be found in St. Augustine, St. Thomas, the Catechism of the Council of Trent,¹ and Catholic writers in general when treating of the resurrection. During more than fifteen hundred years, Christian divines wrote with equal inaccuracy about the creation of the world and the relations between the earth and the sun. We now know that different properties imply of necessity different structure, and if the risen body is structurally different from the body

¹ Part I., chap. xii., question ix.



laid aside at the hour of death, it is no longer the same body in a material sense. The Abbé errs in ascribing to the Church what is the teaching of some of the Church's members only.

CHAPTER IV.

LET us return from these trifling subtleties. The body of Christ after His resurrection must be taken as the type of that of each of His redeemed. Our sinful bodies will be made like unto His glorious body, according to that mighty working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself. His spiritual body was subject to laws—that is, sequences—wholly different from those which His natural body had obeyed. But He was still in the form of man. He retained all the dignity and sweetness He had during His earthly life. He resembled His former self. His disciples recognised Him, though some doubted. He was full of mystery. To some He appeared to be a spirit, yet was He sometimes strangely materialised and spoke as in the days of His flesh. He appeared or disappeared at will ; He passed like the wind through closed doors ; He bore in His sacred person the marks of His passion ; He ate of fish and honey ; He rose upon the air and ascended out of sight into heaven. In all these respects the spirit-body evolved within us now, and to be developed more completely when we die, will resemble His, or may resemble it if circumstances require.

And has Christ never appeared among men since He rose to heaven? Did He not appear to Saul of Tarsus in His glorified humanity and convert him by that effulgent vision? Have none of the saints ever caught a glimpse of His spiritual body, and are all traditions of His appearing to them visibly to be set aside as the figments of disordered fancy or designing fraud? Is no testimony to be credited unless it conforms to man's ordinary experience?

It is the doctrine of the spiritual body alone that makes the eucharistic presence credible. It alone meets every captious objection and satisfies all sincere inquirers. Christ's spiritual body—His flesh and blood—are present in the elements of bread and wine according to law—the law of spiritual bodies. Matter is no impediment to its presence. It becomes through faith and prayer the substance of the elements or species. Indeed it may be doubted whether anything but God has a substantial existence. There are no ultimate particles, atoms or molecules, into which matter can be resolved. Atoms are infinitely divisible, and in tracing matter up to its primary constituents we arrive at last at points merely of attraction and repulsion, or in other words centres of motion. The only substance or basis of matter we can discover is force. But force is not self-existent. All force is will-force; force is of God. Thus nothing but God really is. He is the self-subsisting and sole-subsisting substance, and nothing whatever in the created universe is a substance and form in itself, nor has life in itself. The truth of this doctrine will no

doubt become more manifest to us in the future life than it is now. Force will rule in the sphere of spiritual bodies more visibly, though not more really, than in our world of grosser matter. Moreover, to return to my point, Christ's spiritual body has the property of illimitable extension, and therefore becomes in relation to us ubiquitous. It is present on every altar at the same time, and in every host without suffering division and without ever being consumed. When we communicate we bear witness to His resurrection, and receive a pledge of our own. We accept the adorable, and worship His spiritual body, which commingles with ours, thus making us members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.

The doctrine of the spirit-body is no barren speculation. We are intimately concerned with the state of the departed, and our means of communication with them has no small influence on our faith, devotion, and piety. The more we can realise our communion with them, the less we are subjected to the dominion of time and sense, and the more elevation is given to our thoughts and entire character. So long as we imagine them to be spirits only, waiting in a state of suspense and imperfection for a future organisation, and incapable, so far as our reason can prove, of any active operation or passive impressions, deprived of memory because deprived of the cerebral tablets, some kind of which memory needs, and bereft of all individuality and identity with their former selves, we can have no intercourse with them except-

ing one of the vaguest and most shadowy description. But when, on the contrary, we feel and know that they have not only a spiritual but also a bodily personality ; that they hover around us and as near to us as we are near ourselves ; that their corporeity is such as enables them, occasionally at least, to come into sensible contact with our senses, to hear, to reply, to appear and to see,—the credibility of Scripture and the Christian revelation is enhanced to our apprehension a thousand times, and the immortality of man becomes something more than an article of faith, and acquires the nature of a demonstrated fact.

It is worthy of remark that this doctrine is in complete harmony with the fundamental dogma of revealed religion—namely that God was from all eternity manifested by His only begotten Son, the Word, who was from the beginning ‘in the *Form of God*,’—by which term we can understand nothing less than a certain corporeity—an embodiment, as various passages of the Old Testament seem to show, in the human shape, after the likeness and image of which man himself has been formed. And if God Himself could not, or at all events did not, subsist at any time without a defined and visible manifestation of His glory in the *Person* of His son, how much more must it be essential to every soul of man that it should, after death as well as before death and in the day of judgment, have an organism in which to act and suffer, to receive and to convey moral and intellectual impressions ! Without this the spirit would be im-

passive and inactive in the midst of the stupendous marvels and glories of the kingdoms of nature and of grace.

If any one indoctrinated in the truth of the spiritual body will take a Greek Concordance, and with its aid refer to every passage in the New Testament in which the word *ἀνάστασις* occurs, he will find a ray of light clearing their sense in every instance. Take for example St. Matt. xxiv 23-33, and what can we infer from it but that, in the resurrection, they who have part in it will be 'as the angels of God in heaven,' having spiritual bodies, and that, as regards the resurrection of the dead, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are not among the dead but are risen already? The resurrection, so far as they are concerned, is past, otherwise the words of our Lord are void of all signification. When He affirms of them that they are alive, He speaks as 'touching the resurrection of the dead.' He declares that they are alive in this sense; and if we would know some particulars respecting their mode of life, we have only to ascend the Mount of Transfiguration with Peter and James and John, and then we shall see, not indeed Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but two other saints of the Old Testament equally dear to God, equally distinguished in the ministry of progressive revelation, Moses and Elias, appearing in glory, in visible glorious spiritual bodies, conversing with their Saviour and Lord on the de cease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem. Bishop Newton, in commenting upon Christ's conclusive answer to the Sadducees, observes very pertinently: '*Ἀνάστασις*, the

word constantly used throughout the New Testament for the *resurrection*, signifies a rising again, a life after death, another state of the same person after the present ; but never once, that I know of, signifies, or even implies, *the resurrection of the same body*.¹ In fact, 'the resurrection of the dead' is, in the minds of the Scripture writers, frequently equivalent to the immortality of the soul.


In prophetic language referring to the resurrection, the 'last day' is often taken literally to represent a space between one rising and setting of the sun, or rather one rotation of the earth on its axis. But surely it were wiser to give the expression a broader sense. If the first 'days' of the world's history are now universally admitted not to have been periods of twenty-four hours each, why should we hesitate to extend in an equal degree the signification of 'the last day?' When our Saviour used that expression four times in His discourse with the Jews on the Bread of Life (St. John v. 39, 40, 44, 54), when He promised again and again that He would raise up 'at the last day' all who came to Him for the heavenly manna, is it to be supposed that He passed over, in His gracious promises, that day of death which is to each man *his* last day, and spoke only of a sudden and miraculous reassembling of all the scattered particles of the bodies of the human race on one particular and literal 'day' far distant in the ages to come?

¹ Dissertation 58.

CHAPTER V.

LET us now see how the longest passage in Scripture relative to the resurrection will read with the assistance of this too-long neglected doctrine of the spiritual body. Let us see whether that doctrine will not operate in this case like a prism, separate the rays of heavenly light, and bring out their several colours in a glorious spectrum. By this species of spectrum analysis we shall perhaps discover more than we suspected of the Divine mind and its intentions as to the future of man. What I enclose in parentheses is an expansion of what I suppose to have been going on in the Apostle's mind. 'But if Christ is preached that He rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, Christ is not raised (for He is in all respects your type, and what is true or false about His rising, is true or false respecting yours also). But if Christ is not raised, then our preaching is vain and your faith is vain also. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God, in that we have witnessed concerning God that He raised up Christ, whom He raised not up if the dead are not raised (one by one, according as they die, in spiritual bodies like unto His). For if the dead are not (thus) raised (at the hour of death, if their spirits are not set free by death, and intromitted into another world invested in spiritual bodies, even as He, as soon as dead, passed

in His glorious body into Paradise and visited the spirits in prison,—if this be not so, then) neither is Christ raised. But if Christ be not raised, your faith is in vain, you are still in your sins. Then they who have fallen asleep in Christ (not having awoken out of the sleep of death—not having arisen from the bed of death in the fine robes of the spiritual body) are perished (and come utterly to an end). If in this life only we have hope in Christ (and not in the resurrection-life following immediately after death), we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become (in His spiritual body) the first fruits of them that slept. (The first fruits of the harvest are a sample of what is to come, and, when presented in the temple, signify that the remainder is pure and hallowed; so Christ, who after His resurrection was presented in the heavenly temple, is to be regarded as the exemplar and type of that harvest of souls which began to be gathered in immediately after the presentation of the first fruits. But He would not be their fitting exemplar and type, if their bodies, yet to be redeemed, were lying in a state of corruption and pollution year after year, until at length, after ages which no man can now calculate, they should be raised from their degradation. Such an interval would oblige us to put a forced and painful construction on the assurance that Christ has become their first fruits. But when we think of them as rising the moment they fall; as living again the moment they die; as raised from the dead the instant their bodies become the tomb of the soul; as triumphing over



death immediately, as Christ triumphed in body and in spirit ; as finding themselves, as He found Himself after all was finished, clothed upon with a " house from heaven," a " tabernacle not made with hands," a body of an ethereal texture and suited to another sphere—then we recognise indeed the force and truth of the expression that Christ has become the first fruits of them that slept. The after fruits must be like the first fruits) ; for since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead, and as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive (straightway after death in body and in soul). But each man in his own order (each at his appointed moment of quitting this earth), Christ the first fruits (then the after fruits, or living members of His mystical body, each in the order of his decease), then afterward they that are Christ's (who will be alive and remain) at His coming. (When these have been changed, and have, without dying, been transfigured and endued with spiritual frames), then cometh the end . . . for He must reign, till He hath put all His enemies under His feet, and the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. (But death is destroyed by faith and by dying in the faith. Death is then followed by life, a life of spiritual corporeity.) Else what shall they do which are baptised in hope of a resurrection from the dead. If the dead rise not at all (in death, with spiritual bodies out of the natural), why are they then baptised in hope of a resurrection from the dead ? And why stand we in jeopardy every hour (exposing ourselves to death, if we may not forthwith rise from

it)? I protest by the rejoicing over you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily (so far as my will and incurring of danger are concerned). If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me if the dead (in the arena) rise not (in twofold life from the sand saturated with their blood and strewn with their bones)?

‘But some man will say, how are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come? (Senseless man! That which thou sowest is not the body that will rise again. The resurrection body will be of another kind. Difference of corporeity is no new idea to you. You know how different the flesh of men is from that of beasts, of fishes, and of birds; in the like manner there are heavenly and earthly bodies. The glory of the heavenly bodies is one; the glory of the earthly bodies is another. Among the heavenly bodies also which fill the sky there is a great variety of splendour. The glory of the sun, the moon, and the stars is diverse, and one star differs from another star in glory. In the resurrection of the dead a similar diversity will be observed between the body that dies and the body that lives again. The animal body is sown corrupt, the spiritual body is raised incorrupt. The animal body is sown in dishonour, the spiritual body is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in might; it is sown a natural body, but it is immediately raised in a totally different condition, namely, as a spiritual body, the image of the second Adam, the Lord from heaven.

‘For this I say, brethren, that it is impossible any-

thing in the earthly image of the first Adam, anything that is mere flesh and blood, should inherit the kingdom of God, or that a body of corruption should inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery ; we shall not all sleep the sleep of death ; there are many, many Christians who will be alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, and these will not die, but their animal bodies will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the sounding of the archangel's trump, into the spiritual bodies resembling those which the saints who have died in the Lord have already worn, and in which they will come with Christ at His second appearing. At the sound of that spiritual trump the dead will rise, or come again (for the expressions in Scripture are equivalent), incorruptible, whether they swell the train that follows their returning Lord, or whether they close in some mysterious way with those remains of the former bodies which happen to remain in the sepulchres and which have not yet been resolved into dust and gases and been absorbed by other men. This material and literal resurrection of the body may take place while we who are alive and remain shall be changed as Elias was changed and carried up into heaven in a chariot of fire. Departed spirits may have an affinity for the atoms which once formed part of their mortal frames, and may be possessed of the desire and will to rarefy them into the nature of a spiritual body wherever they may have been preserved from actual incorporation into the bodies of others. In any case) this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this

mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.' (Death—the last enemy that shall be destroyed—is overcome by the resurrection; and the resurrection of the body, the change of the animal to the spiritual body, takes place in each man, in his own order, at the time of his death, but without prejudice to the doctrine of a general resurrection at Christ's coming, and even to the actual rising from the graves of those who really will be in the graves at His appearing.)

The reader will judge whether the interpretation involved in this paraphrase is not more consistent with the various declarations of Scripture concerning the resurrection than those which are generally given, and whether it solves the difficulties, scientific, biblical, and dogmatic, with which the doctrine is supposed to be attended. The resurrection of Jesus Christ was constantly before the mind of St. Paul as the figure of his own; and as Christ rose from death immediately in His spiritual body, and was that very day with the penitent thief in Paradise, so St. Paul was ever striving to know Him and the power of His resurrection, yearning even for fellowship with His sufferings and conformity to His death, if by any means he might attain to a like joyful and blessed resurrection from the dead at the moment of death, and clothed in a spiritual frame. (See Ep. to Phil. iii. 10, 11.)

CHAPTER VI.

THE sacrament of baptism is constantly represented in Scripture as a type of death and the resurrection. But how imperfect would be this representation if between death and the resurrection a period of thousands of years were to elapse : the figure would no longer hold good ; it would be in the highest degree forced and unnatural, nor would the apostolic exhortations to newness of life which are grounded upon it be as persuasive as the Spirit of God intended them to be. The immersion of the infant or neophyte in the water represents the plunging into the cold river of death, and the rising from the water is a lively image of the immediate resurrection of the soul-body. The chrisom, or white baptismal robe, figures to our minds the spiritual body which envelops the soul after death. Nor is baptism a mere figure ; it commences that rising of the soul and body which death is to consummate. It communicates regenerating grace ; and the soul which is renewed by grace from on high, exerts a direct influence on the spiritual body within us, which is commensurate with our mortal body and depends for its growth and development, its purity and power, its splendour and perfection, on the principles by which it is ruled and the moral discipline to which it is subjected. It is capable of being retarded in its growth, stunted, crippled, and defiled for time and eternity, and it is capable also

of being renewed in strength and beauty from day to day. Where the path of the Christian is like the shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day, the interior, magnetic, or ether body, which is elaborated as truly within us as electricity or nerve fluid, flourishes in an inverse degree in proportion as the mortal body loses its powers and faculties, and succumbs to the untoward influences of advancing years. To use the language of the Apostle (2 Cor. iv. 16): 'Though our outward man perish, *our inward man* is renewed day by day.' But, whatever may be its condition, when the inevitable moment arrives, it takes the place of the natural body as the organ of the soul, and we might almost say that the spiritual body is the soul, and the soul is the spiritual body, so completely are they united one to the other, and so inseparable are their properties, destinies, and experiences. Every Christian who trusts to his regenerate instincts, whatever creeds he may have been taught to repeat, hopes and believes that, after death, he will enjoy a substantial existence and enter into a state where he will have sensible emotions. It is only the jargon and logic of the schools which defrauds us of the consolatory expectation of seeing, walking, flying, praising, praying, when death is past. Every treatise, sermon, hymn, that relates to the departed nourishes this hope, and treats of death as a true resurrection, and not as a mere manumission of a liberated gas or essence into space. And this blessed hope is nurtured by the Apostles of our Lord, who constantly blend together the ideas of resurrection from spiritual death,

which is a figure, and from natural death, which is a reality. 'We are buried with Christ,' says St. Paul (see Ep. to Rom. vi. 4, 5), 'by baptism into death, that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.' The exhortation that follows, though it does not prove that intense, complete, active life follows us immediately after death, yet it is of such a nature that it would lose its point and pertinence if we did not rise from death strictly, as Jesus Christ rose, in a spiritual body. It seems to take this for granted as an established and uncontested fact.

Indeed, when the Apostle Paul wrote to the Hebrews and reminded them of the great and glorious privileges they had obtained, he told them, among other things equally transporting, that they were come to the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, and to the spirits of just men made perfect. But how could they have been made perfect, if their souls and bodies were separated, and the one waiting for the other till many ages should run their course? The Fathers assure us that the soul cannot be perfect without the body, and that hence arises the necessity of the resurrection. But St. Paul says the spirits of the just on high are spirits of men made perfect, and hence we may conclude that they have a perfect organisation suited to their place of activity and reward.

Thus human life is a series of resurrections, all of

them real, yet not all in the same sense. Birth itself is a kind of rising from the dead ; so is the second birth or regeneration, the spiritual baptism ; so is the conversion of a soul from the error of its ways ; so is waking out of sleep ; and so, in an eminent degree, is death, when the body succumbs and perishes to rise again without a moment's delay in a spiritual form ; and so also will be the coming again of Christ with His saints, who will rise just as truly as descend from heaven, for height and depth, descend and mount, are but modes of speech and condescensions to the weakness of human understanding. Finally, too, there will be, as the Scripture seems to declare, a resurrection of the ashes of the dead where such ashes actually remain embedded in the earth. *Angeli operabuntur ad resurrectionem, colligendo cineres*, says St. Thomas, but this can be only when such ashes are really to be found. God Himself cannot 'keep His eye' on ashes, as belonging to individuals, which He by His natural providence will have reduced into a gaseous condition, altered chemically, and incorporated a million times over in the bodies of multitudes without number. To affirm that in this way He 'keeps His eye' on the 'essential' parts of our human nature is to build theology on scientific error. It served for the time past, but it will not serve for the time to come. You might as well say that the entire human race will, in the flesh, bone for bone, and muscle for muscle, meet together in the narrow pass of the valley of Jehosaphat, which is about half a mile long and being fast filled up.

It is no disparagement to the chief of the Fathers, St. Augustine, or the chief of the schoolmen, St. Thomas, to say that their attention had not been called to the great facts of that apocalypse of nature which is so marked a feature of our times. They were profoundly versed in Scripture and in philosophy; but it was not the philosophy of physical science, the truth of which is capable of demonstration. The main objection to their teaching on the subject of the resurrection is drawn from a closer observance of the properties of matter than it had ever been their lot to put in practice. Whether it be maintained that human bodies will rise after thousands of years entire in all their parts and molecules, or that they will rise in their natural condition, but retaining what are called the 'essential' parts only of those bodies, the thesis maintained is utterly untenable and inconsistent with facts of which we are fully cognisant. This is not a matter of opinion, it is what we *know*, and we know it, too, with a knowledge much more easy of attainment than that of the great antiquity of the world and the Copernican system of astronomy. Those who adhere to the scholastic theory of the resurrection must abandon their fond iteration of the dicta of St. Thomas, or stultify themselves in the view of science and resign all hope of guiding the educated minds of the next generation into the pastures of revealed truth. It is only against the opinions and teaching of fallible men that a protest is here entered. No dogma of the Church is called in question; on the contrary, every dogma of the Church is accepted with

reverence and loyalty. But the Church has been providentially preserved from ever declaring that the Antipodes do not exist, or that the sun does move round the earth. She has been preserved in like manner from ever defining the manner in which the dead will rise in a sense irreconcilable with Pauline declarations and with modern scientific disclosures. When the doctrine of the spiritual body comes to be generally canvassed, it will be found that the Church has decided next to nothing on these questions, and that physical science may range in this sphere of thought almost at will without fear of encountering decisions of ecclesiastical authority.

The doctrine of the spiritual body derives illustration also from the accounts given in the Gospels of demoniacal possession. From these it appears to be of the very nature of a spirit to require an organism, and that there are unclean spirits abroad whose tendencies are towards the material organisation of men and even of brutes. However foreign to our personal experience, we are bound to accept the Evangelical histories of these spirits as true, particularly as they are recorded in the most matter-of-fact style, and are confirmed by contemporaneous and subsequent testimonies. The unclean spirits, then, spoken of in the New Testament, were described as walking through dry places, seeking rest in vain ; as taking other spirits with them more wicked than themselves ; as infuriating men dwelling in tombs, causing them to break chains and fetters and cut themselves with stones ; as calling themselves Legion,

and beseeching that they might be sent into swine ; maddening herds and making them run headlong down steepes to be choked in the sea ; preferring to enter into swine rather than be cast into the abyss ; as praying to the Son of God, and even having their requests granted by Him. Other peculiarities of the unclean spirits are pointed out in Scripture, and, being familiar to my readers, need not here be dwelt on. Suffice it to observe, that they and other evil, familiar, seducing, lying, wonder-working spirits were always dependent on an organism for their action. St. John in the Apocalypse saw some of them in the form of frogs coming out of the dragon's mouth ; and they were able to unite with the spirit-bodies of men because they had a spirit-body of their own. Everything which is said about them points to form and organic action, and tends to refute the notion of an independent spiritual existence in them or in any other creature.

When once the idea of the spiritual body has taken possession of the mind, it attracts to itself a number of illustrations from various sources. One of the most original I have met with in reference to the spirit-body is contained in a private letter from an eminent author which I will venture to quote :—

‘ My own views are much like yours on this point. What is the substance of the crystal ? That mysterious something, invisible, immaterial, which gathers around it matter, making the angles of the facets exact, according to the idea which gives sulphate of soda, or nitrate of zinc, or acetate of lead, or man-

ganate of potash, its character and individuality. Dissolve a salt ; but under proper conditions it will come together again, particle to particle, round its mysterious nucleus, which imposes on it shape and character. The substance, or living being, of salt is its spiritual body determining its form and character and destination. Is it not so ?'

The passage may very well illustrate the affinity, or magnetic attraction, which the spiritual body may be supposed to have for the particles of matter once belonging to its natural body, whenever and wherever such particles have survived the processes of dissolution, decomposition, and reabsorption to which, after death, they will immediately become subject.

CHAPTER VII.

WHEN the Christian mind looks about for types of the resurrection-body, after it has reflected on that of Christ, its instincts lead it to consider that of His spotless mother. The immense majority of Christendom believe, and ever have believed, her body to have been assumed into heaven, to sit beside Her Son in His glory and to be the queen of saints. Yet no one of common observation and sound understanding has supposed that the body of the Virgin Mary was translated to heaven in its natural condition. If it was rescued from the tomb and carried by the angels to a worthier throne even than the bosom of Abraham, it


was first spiritualised, and thus made another type and pledge of what every member of Christ's mystical body will be in the end. Her assumption was also a transfiguration, and her body, which had not returned to corruption, underwent that change to which the spouse of Christ is constantly looking forward in faith and hope.

In writing to the Thessalonians¹ St. Paul endeavoured to console them for the loss of their friends and brethren by death, and the argument which he mainly employed was very naturally this: that they are not really dead, that they have but fallen asleep; that they have awoke from the slumber of death and are living with God safe in His keeping, and waiting for the day when they shall return to earth, when Christ Himself shall bring them in His train, and when they shall meet in the air those who will be alive and remain until the Lord's coming, will be changed into the likeness of their Lord, and be capable of levitation in their new spiritual frames. Thus the spiritual bodies of departed saints and the spiritual bodies of saints who have never passed through the gates of death will meet together and be for ever with the Lord. Death is not necessary in order to change the natural into the spirit-body; the power of God can effect that change in a moment, and will effect it according to His promise when He shall appear again. The presence of Christ alone would suffice, if He pleased, to drive off the denser matter into the more subtle and ethereal. What a convention will that be when the

¹ 1 Thess. iv. 13-17.

Lord, our incarnate God, shall come and all His saints with Him! We have seen museums and aquariums where the treasures of the deep are preserved, where zoophytes and submarine plants rival in beauty and variety the flowers of the parterre; we have seen conservatories full of orchids with their butterfly-like blossoms, ferns and tropical plants of wonderful luxuriance; we have visited zoological gardens and other collections of birds from foreign climes, and have marvelled at the splendour of their plumage and the varied dyes of their infinitely varied plumes. Well, these sea-plants, these tropical flowers, with all the flowery wealth of fields and heaths and plots and groves, these birds of paradise with silky down and glossy necks, if they filled a continent, would be but a faint symbol of the variety of loveliness, the order, the brilliancy of those spiritual bodies which will compose the assembly of the just in the New Jerusalem and on the slopes of the heavenly Zion.

It is of the utmost importance that we should listen with devout attention to every word which our Saviour has uttered respecting the unseen world, if we would form any definite opinion about the spiritual body. Now it is certain that His words, as recorded in the Gospels, give no countenance to the idea of pure incorporeal spirits, but, on the contrary, depict to our minds all the habitants of untrodden spheres as possessed of material attributes—as having organisms of a subtler description than those of earth, yet no less visible and serviceable for the purpose of individualising spirits of diverse orders. Of this the




parable of Dives and Lazarus is a striking example. It exhibits the departed in their twofold life—a life of spirit and a life of form. We may here remark also that in this parable our Lord speaks of *returning* from the dead as a *rising* from the dead, and that the word *rising* in this and other places of Scripture ought not to be pressed too hard, as though it pointed of necessity to an exit from graves or other depths of the earth. According to Scripture phraseology the dead who will come again with Christ at His second advent will rise from the dead, though their natural bodies will long before that period have become an undistinguishable portion of the elements. The ghost of Samuel appeared to Saul to rise out of the earth, though in fact it returned only from Hades in a shadowy ‘form.’ It was wrapped round with raiment, and wore the semblance of its earthly shape. There is no reason why we should suppose it to have been a trick of the witch of Endor. Witches and wizards often had real power, and that person must be credulous—I use the word advertently—who believes all stories of wizardry and all apparitions, ancient as well as modern, to have been impostures. The Scriptures give no intimation of the appearance of Samuel on earth after his death being anything less than a reality; and to those who believe in the spiritual body nothing can seem more probable and, I might almost say, natural.

When the noble Hebrew mother mentioned in the Second Book of Machabees (chap. vii.) exhorted each of her seven sons in turn to resist the commands of a

profane tyrant, she said : ' I know not how you were formed in my womb ; for I neither gave you breath, nor soul, nor life, neither did I frame the limbs of every one of you ; but the Creator of the world, that formed the nativity of man, that found out the origin of all, He will restore to you again in His mercy both *breath* and life.' And the fourth of these martyred sons, ' when he was now ready to die, spoke thus : It is better, being put to death by men, to look for hope from God, to be raised up again by Him ; ' not, surely, at an indefinitely remote period of time, but forthwith, and immediately ' after being put to death.' It was, in short, the idea of the resurrection which enabled these courageous Hebrews to support every extremity of torment rather than violate the precepts of the law. But the resurrection to which they looked forward was one near at hand, a resurrection in a spiritual body having '*breath* and life.' The words of the mother, too, who ' joined a man's heart to a woman's thought,' seem to point to that truth regarding the spiritual body to which I have frequently alluded—that the animal body, when it dies, is the grave-womb of the spiritual body, which springs from it by a second birth corresponding in many respects to the first.

Modern science has brought to light many bodies of extreme subtlety and many subtle properties inherent in them. It has led the minds of men on towards the borders of spirit-land, and taught them that much which used to be called supernatural is natural—that much which used to be called spiritual



is material, because matter is infinitely varied in its degrees of density and fineness. Who would have thought before Franklin that electric sparks could be made to issue from a man at all points? We have now no difficulty in believing on scientific grounds that the air around us may be tenanted by intelligent spirits in robes of finest matter, invisible to us under ordinary circumstances, yet not of necessity either invisible, inaudible, or intangible. The Apocalypse overflows with evidence of this variety of spirit-matter existence in the unseen world. The disciple whom Jesus loved seems to assume it as not needing proof, as a thing admitted by all believers in the Lord's resurrection and ascension, that the spirits of the departed have numberless material attributes and inhabit a *place* of beatitude.

The growth of the spiritual body within us, and the materials out of which it is wrought, are among the deepest mysteries of our being. There can be little doubt that it is elaborated by the joint action of the mind and body, and that its seat is in that nerve-fluid, or ether, which envelops the nerves, and by whose help the motion of their molecules communicates sensations and transmits the mandates of the will. This nerve-ether has been regarded as the vital force. It extends beyond the surface of the body and encompasses each one of us with an envelope of nerve atmosphere, varying in depth and intensity in different individuals. As time advances we may be able to speak with greater precision of the growth of the spiritual body and of its properties during life, but it

is sufficient for the present to know that we possess it, that it enables us to see, to hear, to speak, or to be spoken to, and that it is permanently affected by our moral and mental conduct—that it is our second man, the undeveloped plan of our future frame, the germ of an immortal plant, as Bonnetti taught a hundred years ago.¹ Nor need these statements startle any one who reflects on the many extraordinary occult faculties which we undoubtedly possess. When Moses came down from Mount Sinai his face shone so that he needed to put a veil on his face. When Stephen addressed the council in Jerusalem his face was bright as that of an angel. When Christ was transfigured on Mount Tabor His spiritual body from within shone forth in its native might and splendour, overpowering the dimness of the flesh which He had assumed for us men and for our salvation. Elias was borne aloft in the air; Ezechiel was lifted up by the Spirit and brought in the vision of God to Jerusalem; Philip was caught away by the Spirit and found in a distant spot; many of the saints have been rendered ecstatic and raised from earth when engaged in earnest prayer; while somnambulism, trance, clairvoyance, mesmerism, demoniacal possession, memory marvellously revived in precision and compass, discrimination of colours by the blind through their touch, speaking with tongues, bilocation and animal magnetism, clearly prove that we have faculties which are not ordinary, but which might become so if it were God's will and for our advantage that they should be commonly ex-

¹ *Ricerche filosofiche su le prove del Cristianesimo.* Venezia, 1771.

perienced. Energy of mind could dominate and direct bodies of any density, from the viewless and imponderable ether to rocks of granite and masses of iron. Whatever has been once might be again any number of times. We conclude, therefore, from analogy, and even without the aid of Scripture, that, having many latent powers, it is neither impossible nor improbable that we may have a body within us which at death will burst its shell and expand into fair proportions. The butterfly is the type, not of the soul merely, but of the soul-body, which will emerge from its chrysalid state into a higher life and a more beautiful sphere.

Non v' accorgete voi, che noi siam vermi -
Nati a formar l'angelica farfalla ?¹

Thus, too, an inner impulse rends the veil of the old husk of the dragon-fly ; clear plates of sapphire mail cover him entirely ; his wings grow like gauze, and, wet with dew, he flies through crofts and pastures like a living flash of light.² Dr. Newman makes the soul of Gerontius say after death :—

I am not dead,
But in the body still ; for I possess
A sort of confidence, which clings to me
That each particular organ holds its place
As heretofore, combining with the rest
Into one symmetry, that wraps me round,
And makes me man, and surely I could move,
Did I but will it, every part of me.

If we are to exist hereafter, nothing can be more


¹ Dante, *Il Purgatorio*, canto x.

² Tennyson, *The Two Voices*.

reasonable than to expect that the rudiments of our future existence in body and soul should, on careful examination, be found within us even now. This is what the analogies of nature would lead us to look for, and it is precisely that view which the inspired writer who has dwelt most largely on the resurrection supports. Independently of any facts which may be adduced, it would be highly unphilosophical to regard as unlikely a future transfusion of human nature with its individuality, memory, and conscience, into a new and more refined corporeal structure.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE manner in which we are accustomed to speak of the departed and of the invisible world is calculated to deceive and render us very impractical in our spiritual life. We constantly use terms which imply distance and absence ; and though there is a sense in which these expressions are true, there is a sense also in which they are false. The spirits of the departed are nearer to us than they ever were while in the flesh—nearer to us than the air we breathe. To communicate with them by word of mouth, by invocation and by prayer, is no superstition, but faith, and is pregnant with consolatory and beneficial results. Even supposing the ether which surrounds the stars and planets to be their peculiar sphere, they are, nevertheless, or can be when they will, indescribably



near to us in consequence of the rapid, thought-directed movements of their spiritual bodies.

The doctrine of the immortality of the body naturally inclined Christians in the early ages to repudiate the Pagan custom of burning the dead, and to bury them reverently in the earth, preserving them as long as possible from decay. But now that the most serious forms of Paganism are overthrown, now that it is known and felt on all hands that burning or burying is indifferent as regards the ultimate destiny of the natural body, there seems to be no occasion whatever for making it a religious question.

Tabesne cadavera solvat
An rogos, haud refert.¹

The discussion is simply one of social importance, and nothing can be more inept than to advocate the practice of burying on the ground of its being connected with the maintenance of the doctrine of the resurrection of the body. Even one of the most strenuous opponents of cremation says: 'I do not mean that it may not very properly be resorted to under exceptional circumstances. As, for instance, in time of war or pestilence, when the large number of decaying corpses, or the deadly infection which they contain, renders their preservation dangerous to the public health.'² If cremation were practised among Christians, it would be accompanied by the rites of the Church. It is not desirable, in any case, to maintain true doctrine by repeating false state-

¹ Lucan, *Pharsalia*, viii. 809.

² Rev. R. F. Clark, *Month*, May 1875.

ments. The populace have long been deluded by the idea that the remains of Christians will rest in the grave till the judgment day, and this indeed is positively affirmed on tombstones and mural tablets in every church and churchyard, Catholic or Protestant, throughout the kingdom. Yet nothing can be more manifestly untrue; and now that all educated persons know it to be false, they ought not to reassert it themselves or be parties to the erection of such mendacious monuments by others.

The very generations of the dead
Are swept away, and tomb inherits tomb.¹

‘Our organised bodies,’ as Bishop Butler says in his ‘Analogy,’² ‘are no more ourselves, or part of ourselves, than any other matter around us.’ The natural body is in a constant state of decay and renovation, and it is not, nor ever will be, by it that our identity is maintained. The mind and its spirit-frame now preserve our identity, and will preserve it through the crisis of death, the intermediate state, and the coming of the Lord to judge both quick and dead. We are not starting aside from the sure word of prophecy, but rather striving to conform our ideas to its inspired predictions. We submit implicitly to the authority of Scripture, and to the Church, who is that Scripture’s appointed keeper and unerring exponent, while we openly rebel against hoary and regnant falsehood. In conformity with this safe and salutary principle, let us remember that though there is a sense in which

¹ Byron.

² Chap. I. p. 26.

we look for a general resurrection yet future, there is a sense also in which that resurrection has already commenced and is perpetually going on. As at every minute, in some part or other of the world, a child is born into light, so at every minute is some spirit rising from the grave-womb of the natural body into a real and soul-matter existence in a world unseen though near at hand. Christ is even now the resurrection and the life. The hour cometh and now is that the dead hear the voice of the Son of God inviting them to the inner courts of His temple to minister before Him in the material robes of a spiritual priesthood.¹ It was when the Messiah had overcome the sharpness of death that He opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.

There are many who think—and the belief is ancient—that the departed spirit hovers for awhile with interest and affection over its earthly remains ; that it separates from the body more readily in one person than in another ; that it watches over the funeral rites ; that it is not unconcerned in the honours paid to the lifeless corpse ; that it sympathises in some degree with it when outraged, and that the affinity by which it was drawn to it is not wholly at an end so long as any of its molecules cohere. This idea seems to be confirmed by the fact, which none who accept the Scriptures as their guide can dispute, that some natural bodies have been restored to life ; that Lazarus burst his grave-clothes ; that the

¹ See *Light leading unto Light*, pp. 62, 63, 64, 65, 67, 79, 83, 94, 95, 154, 183-5.

daughter of Jairus was raised by Christ, and the widow of Nain's son; that Elias raised the widow's son; that Eliseus' staff restored life to the child of the Sunamite mother, and his bones 'prophesied'¹ of the resurrection by causing the man who was cast lifeless into his grave to come to life and stand on his feet; that Tabitha and Eutychus were brought back from the dead by Paul, and that when Christ died many bodies of the saints which slept arose and went into the holy city and appeared unto many. All these resurrections seem to point to that rising of the dead which will take place when Christ shall come again. Those who at that time really rest in the tomb or the depths of the sea, those who have not been thoroughly resolved into gases, passed through countless chemical changes, and fed the generations of the living, may be expected then to close in some mysterious manner, as yet wholly impenetrable to our imagination, with the spirit-bodies descending from on high—to undergo in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the change indicated by the prophets of the New Testament—to fulfil to the letter the words of inspiration, and realise in a vast multitude the few types of resurrection of the natural body which it has pleased God to exhibit to mankind. Thus the spirit-frame in which Christ had visited the spirits in prison while His body lay in the sepulchre, closed with that material body at the resurrection, and spiritualised it according to His assimilating power. It is only those who have made this subject their special study who will be able

¹ Eccclus. xlviii. 14.

to place themselves exactly in my point of view, and I must expect to be misunderstood and misinterpreted by many persons who are not otherwise unfriendly. Nevertheless, I think the distinction here drawn is sufficiently clear between the dead who will be in their graves at Christ's coming, and the dead who will have undergone every kind of change and have formed constituent parts of other bodies,

CHAPTER IX.

THE text alluded to in the last sentence (St. John v. 28, 29) is often made to prove more than it warrants. Πάντες οἱ, as Locke observes in his unanswerable letter to the Bishop of Worcester, denotes 'persons, and not precisely bodies.' The resurrection of the dead is frequently predicted in the New Testament, but not the resurrection of the buried. We are never told that God who 'raiseth the dead' and who 'quickeneth the dead' will raise again the same natural body in the sense generally implied; but, on the contrary, we are assured that the body sown is not that body that shall be; that the body raised differs from that which is laid down as the flesh of man differs from the flesh of beasts, fishes, and birds, or as the sun, moon, and stars differ from one another; that it is as different as a corruptible, weak, natural, mortal body is from an incorruptible, powerful, spiritual, immortal body; and lastly, as different as

a body of flesh and blood is from a body that is not flesh and blood. The true meaning of the text in question must be sought in its context. The resurrection of which Christ speaks is present. 'The hour is coming, *and now is*, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God (verse 25), and when 'all that are in the graves shall hear His voice' (verse 28). And even if these words of our Lord embrace in their wide extent the period of His second coming, the number of those bodies which will then be in their graves will, even if the practice of inhumation be continued up to that time, be small indeed—the merest handful—when compared with the rest of the generations of men. 'All that are in the graves,' says Bishop Newton, 'is nothing more than a periphrasis for the dead. . . . If this (text) is any proof of the resurrection of the body, it proveth too much; that the dead bodies can "hear and come forth" without their souls; for I presume it will hardly be said that the *souls* are in the grave too. . . . St. Paul is, I think, the only one who hath treated purposely and at large of the resurrection-body; and he is so far from defining it to be the same numerical body (a body, that is, composed of the same numerical parts), that he describes it as of a totally different form and order.'¹

There were two writers in the last century, who, impressed with the insuperable difficulties of the resurrection as generally taught, looked about for some probable solution. One of these was Mr. Broughton

¹ Dissertation 58.

of Bristol, author of a book entitled 'A Prospect of Futurity,' who adopted the idea embodied in the traditionary Luz of some Rabbis, and supposed that at the last day God would, out of a very small residue of the human frame, reconstruct the entire body. But, without starting any other objection to this theory, it is sufficient to say that no such residue will be found. Not one particle of matter which once belonged to those who lived ages ago, now exists in a separate and uncompounded state except under circumstances of special preservation. The other theorist on the subject was Dr. Clarke, author of the 'Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion,' who imagines that there is an original stamen or seminal principle which is in effect the entire body; that all the rest is extraneous matter.; that this in all changes and revolutions continues unchanged, and is the root or seed which by degrees expands and unfolds itself into the resurrection. Now this looks like a forecast of the spiritual body, or rather, I might say, like feeling after a simple and humble acceptance of the declarations of St. Paul, that there is a spiritual body, and that the resurrection-body is that spiritual body. And here I am reminded of a nonconformist minister, Dr. John Pye Smith, of whose notions on the subject I will give an idea by quoting from a private letter.

'Dr. John Pye Smith used to hold very much the same theory as Mr. Earle. He could not conceive of existence without bodily organisation,—so, instead of leaving the problem of the physiology of a future life among those problems which are insoluble, because

we have no data to help us to a conclusion, he adopted the theory that every human being has an immortal material nucleus, somewhere secreted in his organism or associated with it, and that this becomes the spiritual body when the material body is laid aside. I am not sure whether Dr. Smith published this theory, but he used to talk about it to his students, one of whom told me of it many years ago.'

'The true doctrine,' wrote the Rev. Dr. Bayley of Argyle Square, 'that man rises immediately after death in a spiritual human form; that which was ancient in the time of Plato; that which was confirmed by our Lord when He said, "God is not God of the dead, but of the living; for all live to Him" (Luke xx. 38); that which is in every way worthy of man, and full of hope and consolation for him—that remains impregnable. Let us cling to that as the star of life, assuring us that, when we are "absent from the body, we shall be present with the Lord" (2 Cor. v. 8).'

It is, I think, not difficult to see how the expectation of a rising of the natural body took root in the minds of early Christians. They had been taught by the Evangelists and Apostles of the Lord, to look for a speedy reappearing of their Saviour and God. They attached themselves to the literal meaning of His words, 'a little while and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.' They were all perfectly persuaded that the time was short, and that the Lord Jesus would, according to their prayers, come quickly. The gospel, they imagined, would soon be preached

for a witness to all nations, and then the end would come. To their mind the east was already blushing with the tints of the eternal morning, and before the precious remains of their brethren could resolve into dust and air, they believed that the Lord Himself would descend from heaven in a cloud, and prophesy to the dry bones of the departed, and breathe upon the slain that they might live. It never occurred to them that ages might pass away, and a thousand years be added to a thousand, without any determinate sign of Christ's coming being discernible on earth or in the sky. They had not lived, as we have, to see the remains of their friends and brethren in the Lord incorporated with the elements and utilised for the life and sustenance of succeeding generations. Hence, familiar as they were with individual cases of resurrection, they expected that all would rise again in their bodies, though the expression 'resurrection of the body' never once occurs in Scripture. They were assured, indeed, that this was impossible by an inspired Apostle; they were bid to expect the resurrection of a spiritual body and not one of flesh and blood; but the grosser conception having once taken hold of their minds, it became traditional and was transmitted through ages of twilight along with numerous errors of a natural and scientific order. Nor is it with any irreverence towards Fathers and doctors who may have strengthened this belief, that I disown for myself a faith in the resurrection of the natural body in its natural condition. That it will rise I firmly believe, but I am assured by an unerring

authority that 'it is raised a spiritual,' and not a natural, 'body.' Moreover, as time goes on, and the ages yet to come seem to lengthen and multiply before our eyes, the solution of continuity in the organic life of the departed which is involved in the scholastic tradition seems less and less admissible, and the fact of their being already clothed in spiritual bodies is borne in upon our minds with fuller and fuller assurance. The 'anima separata' of the schools is simply a myth, and as fabulous as the camel slain at the tomb of the Prophet, on which the faithful Mussulman will ride at the resurrection. Even those who teach the 'anima separata' constantly use language inconsistent with their teaching, as St. Thomas Aquinas, to take but one example—when he says, speaking of the lost: '*Diversitas naturæ spiritualis et corporalis non impedit quin anima sit forma corporis*,' and '*Spiritus damnati ubicunque extra infernum sint, semper vident ignem inferni*.'¹ Thus again, in the notes to the Douay version of the Bible, we find in the comment on the oft-cited passage in Job (xx. 25, 27): 'The self-same flesh shall rise at the last day by the power of God, *changed in quality* but not in substance,' which accords perfectly with what is contended for in this volume. The resurrection-body will be *changed in quality*, yet substantially the same with the natural body from which it emerged.

Bishop Challoner, in his 'Catholic Christian Instructed,' draws the same distinction between the

¹ *Summa Minor*, Tractatus xlvi. Supp. Quæst. 70.

natural and the resurrection-body, as between the body which our Lord had before His crucifixion and that in which He is present in the sacrament of the Eucharist. His body there 'may,' he says, 'be called a spiritual body, in the same sense as St. Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 44, speaking of the resurrection of the body, says: *It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body*: not but that it still remains a true body as to all that is essential to a body, but that it partakes in some measure of the qualities and properties of a spirit.' I am the more particular in quoting these passages, because one or two persons, neither wise nor courteous, have gone so far as to style my doctrine heretical—an imputation which I repudiate with all the earnestness of one who desires to be free from every taint of heresy, formal and material. Happily we are not living under a gloomy despot like Louis XI., who, incited, it is said, by his confessor, ordered all teachers to conform to the opinions of Aristotle, of his commentator Averrhoes, of Aquinas, and Bonaventura and Scotus.¹


Friends have often written and spoken to me of the doctrine of the spiritual body as a theory—a valuable theory—a plausible theory—an ingenious theory—and the like. Now on this point I wish to save myself from all misconception. I do not put it forward as a theory. I should not run the risk of displeasing, startling, shocking, alienating many, whose esteem I value, for the sake of a mere hypothesis. I should not set myself apparently in oppo-

¹ Willert's *Reign of Louis XI.*, p. 296.

sition to authority for the pleasure of propounding an individual fancy. It is, in my opinion, no theory at all. It is no more a theory than immortal life, the atonement, or future judgment. It is a truth—a revealed truth—and one which, though sadly overlaid and distorted, has been held by Christians in all times either unconsciously or in part. It belongs to the deposit of the faith; it is essentially necessary to other truths of revelation, imparting light to them and deriving light from their light. In this sense and no other I write of it; and in this sense it must stand or fall.

CHAPTER X.

THE spiritual body being a perfect resemblance and reproduction, under altered conditions, of the natural body, it might be expected that it should retain the material impressions in which memory is supposed to consist. Successive acts of consciousness leave indelible traces within us. Every thought that rises in our minds is accomplished by some molecular motions and displacements in the brain, and parts of these are in some manner stored up in the brain-cells so as to produce what may be called our physical memory. Other parts of these subtle motions are communicated—we may believe—to the spiritual or unseen body, and are stored up there, forming a memory which may be utilised when that body is set free by death and better able to exercise its functions.



It will thus retain its hold on the past, and serve the grand purpose of maintaining a continuous intelligent existence.¹ It is memory above all things which constitutes our identity with our former selves when we have passed from youth to age—for not one of the material fibres which we then had any longer exists within us—and it is memory, in like manner, which will in great part form the identity between the individual in his after life and the individual during his probation on earth. Thus the doctrine of the spirit-body is closely connected with the ethics of mankind. We are writing daily our thoughts and deeds on imperishable tablets. We shall be witnesses hereafter for or against ourselves. Out of our own mouths shall we be judged. We shall carry with us through the gates of death our condemnation or acquittal. When the petals of the mind close in sleep evening after evening, the leaves are inscribed with the events of the day; and there is in man a fearfully vivid power of reviving past impressions and memories which we imagined were dead for ever. Memory, like Will, must have an organ, or it is a cipher. We shall carry with us into eternity the elements of our own bliss or woe. Heaven, hell, and purgatory spring out of the nature of things. They are indeed present as well as future. They begin in time. We are all even now in one or the other of these states. In the spiritual body the condition of the soul will only become more defined, more intense. Remorse, despair,

¹ *The Unseen Universe*; or, Physical Speculations on a Future State, p. 159.

impenitence, a disturbed conscience, and the loss of the light of God's countenance—these are hell ; and no figures of speech, no outward symbols of material torment, can exaggerate the idea of suffering which such conditions necessarily imply. Nor is the notion of material pain in the next world to be excluded, for the spirit-body in which we shall be clothed will be far more susceptible of pain and pleasure than the body we now inhabit. The sufferings, however, of the world unseen will be spiritual in the main, and the conclusions of our physical reasoning should be limited to their proper sphere. Nor ought we to think of the triple division of the future state of souls as so marked and absolute as to admit of no degree in each compartment. They are convenient expressions for theology to employ, and they express solemn substantial truths. Yet no one who reflects can doubt that the variety of condition in the world of spirits will be greater than in the world of men. Every shade of knowledge and of ignorance, of virtue and of vice, of happiness and of misery, will be found in that illimitable country whither we tend. The spiritual body also will, by its extreme subtlety and perfect subjection to the rule of thought, have means of exhibiting varieties of feeling such as at present we can but faintly imagine. Isaac Taylor, in his profound and masterly '*Physical Theory of another Life*,' thus enumerates the properties which 'may be regarded as belonging to corporeity abstractedly, and which are likely to attach to the future spiritual body. Such,' he says, 'manifestly, are—the occupation of

place, or a relationship to space and extension ; the consciousness of equable motion, or a knowledge of time ; the consciousness of the properties of matter, or sensation ; an active power over matter, to originate motion ; the susceptibility to imaginative emotions, and to mixed moral sentiments ; and a defined, recognisable individuality.' ¹ Spirits will also, no doubt, have the faculty of weaving in an instant, out of the universal fluid of which all things are made, garments suited to the sphere they intend to visit, and to execute the purpose on which they may be bent.

It is scarcely too much to say that the 'Theory of another Life,' just referred to, is one of the highest efforts of the mind. As a continuous and well-sustained argument from analogy it has few rivals, and I cannot do better than refer those persons to it who would wish to have their ideas rendered more precise in reference to the future body. The author imagines that it may become so purely the instrument of the master power, that it will barely, if at all, enter into the consciousness as a separate existence. Beings such as angels, perhaps, who have never been subject to the conditions of animal life, may, although actually corporeal, need to be informed of their corporeity ; or they may know it rather by reflection and inference than by immediate consciousness. And thus we may conceive of the spiritually embodied departed, in some stage at all events of their future existence, as having recourse to circuitous deductions when required to show that they are anything but spirit, although they

¹ Chap. II. p. 42.

are actually conversant with an external and material world.¹

I am following in this essay with more or less exactness the course of my poem, at least of the earlier part of it ; and I do so because, though verse, when it is worth anything, condenses thought and gives it precision and effect, it simplifies ideas to some minds only and not to all. As some persons are colour-blind, so some are poetry-deaf, and that which would be intelligible to them in prose becomes unintelligible or distasteful when conveyed in the language of poetry. But my aim is to be clearly understood, and I therefore omit no means of attaining that end. The resurrection, as it is generally taught, is equally opposed to reason, to science, and to Scripture. While we are constantly assured in the Bible that the dead will rise, we are never once told that the natural body will rise again without an entire change of condition, but are, on the contrary, reminded in the most emphatic manner that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither can corruption inherit incorruption. 'The time,' says Locke, 'that man is in this world, affixed to this earth, is his being sown, and not when being dead he is put in the grave, as is evident from St. Paul's own words: for dead things are not sown; seeds are sown, being alive, and die not till after they are sown.'² This is but another way of saying what I have frequently insisted on,—that the seed which is

¹ Chap. IX. p. 122.

² Compare Locke's entire reply to the Bishop of Worcester, *Works* IV. 303. London. 1812.

to rise is sown at the moment of death, and germinates immediately, the plant being the spiritual body.

There is a passage in St. Luke¹ on the subject of the resurrection, in which a word that is, in the Douay and the Anglican version, rendered in the future, would more properly have been translated in the past. It would then stand thus : ' The children of this world marry and are given in marriage, but they that *have been* accounted worthy [καταξιωθέντες] of that world [or, to obtain that world] and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage ; neither can they die any more : for they are equal to the angels and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.' The needless introduction of the future tense into this passage embarrasses the meaning and diminishes the force of our Lord's argument, which is to show that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the patriarchs are not dead but live unto God—live to Him like angels, clothed in angelic or spiritual forms. This was the view taken of the resurrection by the pious and valiant Judas Machabeus. The voices of the prophets were ringing in his ears ; he had been educated in the traditions of the Jewish church, and he was taught by the Spirit of Christ. He made offerings and prayers for his companions in arms who had fallen fighting for their country, in order that they might be loosened from any sin still cleaving to their souls. It was not a future only but a present good which he sought for them, and his ideas respecting their state ought to be

¹ xx. 35-36.

interpreted in accordance with the words of Christ Himself regarding the condition of souls after death. But our Lord, as we see in the history or parable of Dives and Lazarus, attributes to such souls corporeity in a certain sense, visibility, agency, and suffering. It is in vain to attempt to bring Christianity down from its high level and accommodate it to mere human experience. It must be taken with all its 'supernaturalism,' for in that it begins and ends. Spiritual things are the substances of which things material are but the shadows. The religion of Christ, apart from what Mr. Matthew Arnold calls its *Aberglaube*, would not be worth contending for.

The Scriptures contain numerous hints on the subject of angelic bodies which may guide us to conclusions respecting the spiritual bodies of those who once lived on earth. But I need not enlarge on this point, because all readers of the Bible are familiar with the attributes of angels, and need only be reminded that these attributes should—*mutatis mutandis*—be transferred to the spiritual body. The universal fluid, out of which all things have been wrought, is the substance out of which the angelic forms are made; and, as the appearances they have assumed in communing with men are so various and mutable, we may believe that they have the power of extemporising bodies suitable to any purpose required. By a supreme creative effort of the will, they can in an instant collect the scattered particles of the atmosphere into such shapes as they choose, and what is here said of them applies also to the spirits of the departed.

CHAPTER XI.

PERHAPS it may be asked how can a spiritual body exist within us now? If two are tenants of one house, will they not interfere one with the other? To this I reply that the existence of a certain kind of spiritual body within us is easily demonstrated. Our bodies are composed of molecules; this none will deny; nor will any one who knows the first principles of physics dispute the fact that these molecules are not compacted into a solid, but are distinctly separated one from another, attracting and repelling each other according to well-known laws. What, then, fills the interstices between them? What but air? And what is air but *pneuma*—breath—spirit? Thus nature itself teaches not only that we may have a spiritual body within us, but that we actually have it, and could not exist without it. There is, therefore, no difficulty in believing on natural grounds that we may have a perfect structure of finer atoms than those of our mortal flesh occupying the spaces between the molecules of the natural body and permeating them without any change in their form, size, or external aspect. It is, of course, a very different thing to have within us a body of inorganic air, whose presence is common to all things around us, and to have a special organic frame, such as we understand by the spiritual body. But the one being granted, the other may easily be conceived. The *licht Körper* is but, as it were, 'a finer light in light'; and as God is ever working

towards the infinitely small as well as the infinitely great, so is He ever working towards the infinitely refined as well as the infinitely dense and coarse. He can resolve the grosser into the finer matter, and the finer into the grosser, and indeed He is continually doing it ; and this resolution appears to make the difference between what we call matter and what we call spirit. That we have a body of air within us is a fact ; that we have a spiritual body is a belief. But a belief may become an ascertained fact, and I am far from supposing that the existence of the spirit-body is incapable of demonstration, though the means of demonstrating it may not as yet be in our hands. No one having an adequate idea of the subtilty of the spiritual body could start the flippant objection which I find in one reviewer, that ‘ there does not appear to be much *packing space*, or anything in the nature of a *spare bedroom* in our present frames, for its temporary accommodation.’ Surely the person who could write thus can have thought and learnt little of the matter, far less have ‘ sufficiently thought it out.’

Every part of the human body is wonderful and mysterious. Even those parts which appear the most solid, such as teeth (which, by the way, some one fancifully called the seeds of the resurrection, because he dreamed that they at least would last till the judgment day), are, when seen through a powerful microscope, found to be porous, like the brain, the muscles, and the nerves. None of their particles actually touch each other ; they move in space ; they attract

and repel like stars and planets. To eyes constructed differently from ours, a portion only of each of them may appear immense, for great and small are only relative terms, and in nature nothing is really small. Every human body is a wide world, but not a solid world: bodies of another and a finer texture may permeate it, even as the effluence from a magnet permeates steel. The phenomenon of demoniacal possession therefore is easily explained, nor does the residence of an extraneous spirit in man present any difficulty when, as in this case, its spiritual body (without which it could have no individuality) is of a finer texture than the human frame. But if an evil spirit can, with its corporeal envelope, dwell within us without disturbing any of our physical functions, what room is left for doubting that we may have a spiritual organism of our own, tenanting the interstices of our material particles and even permeating them, as by its very nature it is capable of doing? The friendship and love which will mark our future state, and contribute powerfully to its blessedness, may be supposed to consist in part of the mutually interpenetrative faculty of the spiritual bodies.

If I were to say that spirit itself is a substance, and, not content with affirming that it has a body, were to assert also that it is a body, I should not be using language unwarranted by one at least of the Fathers of the Church. Tertullian in his 'Treatise on the Flesh of Christ' (c. 5, 6, 11) applies the term body to every substance, and he reckons among incorporeal objects those only which are modes of condition of

substances, such as action, passion, motion, and the like. Hence he declares that God Himself is corporeal, and that the soul, though not material, is nevertheless a body. It is, however, not necessary to employ such language. It is sufficient to say that spirit and form are inseparable, and that the form belonging to a spirit must be a substance and an organism.

There are many, very many, to whom these speculations will appear idle, because they have made up their minds to accept the mystery of creation and their own existence without any commentary on that mystery from the hands of the Creator. Denying as they do the immortality of the soul, they will not care to consider the immortality of the body. I do not address myself to them, but to those only who bow to the authority of Scripture. Yet I would remind them, if these pages should happen to fall into their hands, that if it can be established by solid proof—proof which even they would admit to be incontestable—that one, only one, of the departed has revisited earth and made his presence clear, that single fact is sufficient to establish the existence of the soul after death, and of its possessing an organism which is here called a spiritual body. The entire fabric of infidel materialism then falls to the ground. Life after death becomes a matter of demonstration. The foundations of natural religion are made more solid. Religion is indissolubly allied with philosophy, and the spiritual world is added to the list of inductive sciences. Here the sceptic is not asked to believe in miracles; he is invited only to enlarge

his notion of the bounds of nature. If the proofs are near him, and even at the doors, of the existence of a world of spirits, endowed with a more subtle corporeity than his own, it must be expected that those proofs should be of a different order from what avails in the sphere of grosser matter. It is not wise to thrust them aside because they do not conform to conditions alien to their nature. The proofs a departed spirit has to offer of his presence may be of a higher and more convincing kind than those which are accepted as satisfactory in physical research, yet they may differ from them in many important particulars. We must ask for such evidence only as the circumstances of the case permit. Even from a scientific point of view, that man must be the wisest who has the largest faith in the extent and potency of Nature. Do not her marvels exceed all imagination, and are they not, to our intelligent apprehension, continually on the increase? Does not the air become more rarefied as we ascend a high mountain or mount from earth in a balloon? And what shall we think of those vast interstellar spaces beyond the atmosphere which surrounds our tiny globe? Does not Nature abhor a vacuum? Can she not fill those apparent voids with ether and ethereal forms, and, it may be, ethereal cities, and seas, and mountains, and landscapes, in all the variety and beauty displayed in the endless conformations of matter to which we are accustomed? In her domain we shall find not only the infinitely great and small, but the infinitely various. To talk of matter and body as

if the full meaning of those words were to be limited by our experience is unphilosophical, to say the least. To one of the infusoria, $\frac{7}{1000}$ of an inch long, which make the milk sea, all bodies must appear gelatinous and colourless, since they adhere to each other for many leagues. O man, thou sailest on an ocean of being, and thou hast not yet dived one league beneath the sea.

Superstitions respecting the future of our natural bodies are numerous, and meet us on every hand. The Flemings believed that when Charles d'Amboise, one of the ablest ministers of Louis XI., was buried and his coffin was found empty, the devil had flown away with his body as well as with his soul, and Pomponio Leto (Il Marchese Vittelleschi) in his interesting 'Eight Months at Rome during the Vatican Council,' tells us one of the series of propositions to be laid before the assembled Fathers was, according to the 'Civiltà Cattolica' of February 6, 1869, the assumption of the Virgin in soul and body, which may be set beside the above story from De Barante if by her body the natural body in its unaltered conditions was understood.

CHAPTER XII.

FOR the Christian, the acceptance of the doctrine of the spiritual body seems not to be a matter of choice. The resurrection of the natural body, as commonly taught, is untenable in the presence of physiology

and chemical science. But being bound by Scripture and the Creeds to believe in the resurrection, Christians must resort to some other interpretation than that which tradition has handed down. Revelation hitherto has been progressive, and it will continue to progress. Without being unfaithful to the past, it is ever developing into or towards something more full and true. It is now supplying the Christian mind with that view of the resurrection which is urgently needed, is consonant with Scripture, confirmed by experience, and capable of being harmonised with established formulas. Happy are they who embrace it with all its divinely-appointed safeguards, without rushing into modern extravagances or rebelling against truths and principles which reason and science confirm.

There are many passages in the Old Testament which seem to deny the immortality of the soul and body. Persons are often perplexed in reading them, and complain of their tone, if not their absolute affirmations, being quite at variance with what they are taught in catechisms and creeds. But they will present no difficulty to those who accept the doctrine of the resurrection as it has been here explained. To them the inspired writers will appear to be denying only the renewal of life in the natural body after once it is extinct—denying it, that is to say, as a general rule, without taking into account particular and abnormal exceptions. The following are among the most striking instances of the passages in question. They are simply and literally true on their own plane

of thought, without in the least conflicting with higher truths of the spiritual life :—

There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.—Eccles. ix. 10.

In death there is no remembrance of thee : in the grave who shall give thee thanks ?—Psalm vi. 5.

What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit (Douay version, corruption) ? Shall the dust praise thee ? Shall it declare thy truth ?—Psalm xxx. 9.

Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead ? Shall the dead arise and praise thee ?—Psalm lxxxviii. 10.

This implies, as elsewhere, an answer in the negative, and the negative, therefore, must be true. God will not show wonders to the dead in the sense commonly understood. The dead will not arise and praise Him in the sense of so many expositors. He will not restore the natural life, which is at an end for ever. But the Psalmist proceeds :—

Shall thy lovingkindness be declared in the grave, or thy faithfulness in destruction ?

Shall thy wonders be known in the dark ? and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness ?—Psalm lxxxviii. 12, 13.

The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence, (Douay version, to hell—that is Hades, the place of the departed).—Psalm cxv. 17.

The grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee : they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise thee.—Isaias xxxviii. 18, 19.

If these passages do not convey to our minds the utter and irrevocable destruction of our bodies and their natural life, language has lost its use, and Scripture can no longer be our guide. No expressions could be devised more simple, direct, and plain ;

and to those who are principled in the spiritual body they require no comment, but explain themselves. They are quite in character with the expressions used at a far earlier period by Job, whose words have been pressed in so unscholarlike a manner into the service of a material resurrection. He also, like the Psalmist, Solomon, and King Hezekias, renounces all idea of ever recovering his natural life when once he has laid his weary frame in the tomb.

As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away, so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more.—Job vii. 9.

Popular preachers of a literal rising of the flesh never quote this text, never remind us that the patriarch cried,—

Let me alone, that I may take comfort a little, before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death.—Job x. 20, 21.

When a few years are come (Job says), then I shall go the way whence I shall not return.—Job xvi. 22.

How, then, are we to understand the passage in chapter xix., which material resurrectionists are so fond of quoting as if it were conclusive on their side of the question? Shall we admit that the author of the Book of Job, writing under the influence of Divine inspiration, contradicted himself and maintained in the same breath that he should and that he should not return from the grave? The fact is, that the 25th, 26th, and 27th verses of that chapter are differently rendered in almost every translation, that they are grievously incorrect both in the Douay and the Anglican version, and the best critics are now agreed

as to their having been generally misunderstood. 'In the last day I shall rise out of the earth. And I shall be clothed again with my skin,' which appears in the Douay Bible, is wholly unwarranted by the original; while as to the authorised Church of England translation it should be remembered that no less than seven words in the three verses are in italics, implying that they are not to be found in the Hebrew at all. Among these are the very important words *worms* and *body*. The passage literally rendered is as follows: 'I know that my Redeemer liveth, and He shall at the last stand upon the dust. And after my skin, destroy this, from my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and not a stranger. My inward parts are consumed in my bosom.'

There is no allusion here to dying and being buried, and then rising from the grave, where worms have been feeding on the flesh. These are images introduced by the imagination of translators whose minds were preoccupied by the thought of a carnal resurrection. The idea of Job is simply, that God his Saviour lives and will signally appear for his deliverance while he is still in the flesh. The dreadful diseases of his body will be healed, and the fallen fortunes of his house restored. He will himself be a witness of his own vindication, and it will not be left to strangers and survivors only to record it. He trusted in God that He would deliver him; and he did not trust in vain, for in the end he was able to exclaim: 'I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee.'

The natural body is but the cutaneous covering, as it were, of the spiritual, and when once our eyes are opened to this fact we shall see references to it in Scriptures where we never saw it before. St. Paul in writing to the Philippians says (i. 20, 21, 23): 'Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. . . . I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better.' Cupio dissolvi et esse cum Christo. But Christ is a man. Christ has a spiritual and glorified body. If St. Paul's *spirit* only, disorganised, disfranchised, were to quit the body, it might as well stay where it was. It would be no more in Christ's *presence* there than here. To be with Christ, who has added to the 'form of God' 'the fashion of a man' (Phil. ii. 7, 8), Paul must have a body, a spiritual and glorified body, otherwise there could be no companionship, no reunion. Without the acquisition of this spiritual body, or rather without its full and effective development, death, far from being a gain, would be a considerable loss—a loss not to be repaired, according to old-fashioned ideas, until the second coming of Christ at the end of the world. Hence the Apostle clings to the idea of body as a necessary part of his being, and declares that Christ will be magnified in it whether he lives or dies.¹

And here I may mention, as one of the various impracticable theories that have been started to induce men to believe in a general carnal resurrection at the

¹ See an article on 'The Resurrection-Body *not* the Natural Body' in the *Christian Apologist*, July, 1876.

end of time, that of Gil in his '*Sacred Philosophie*,' published in 1635. In Part II. p. 192, he adduces the attractive power of the magnet on particles of iron, even when mixed with dust, to explain some of the difficulties attending the doctrine of the resurrection: 'And if this be possible to metall, by reason of the *common* spirit, how much more to the soule, when it is commanded to gather together that dust which once it had enlived by itselfe.' That such a magnetic power may be possessed by the spiritual body I have already admitted; but it would be untrue as regards the soul in an utterly incorporeal state, if such a state can be conceived. Nor will the remains of all mankind be in existence at the end of the world in the form of 'dust,' nor in any other recoverable shape. It is not in the 'dust' that the identity of the natural and resurrection-body will consist, but in the spiritual or *substance*-body. 'Non est Christus mortuus,' wrote Dean Colet, 'pro substantiâ corporis, quæ bona est, et manebit in beatis.' 'The qualities of the bodies,' says Gil, 'shall be changed, the substance shall not be lost.'²

CHAPTER XIII.

IT has been stated in these pages repeatedly, and I hope with sufficient clearness, that no change is suggested or desired in any of the confessions of faith

¹ *De Corpore Christi*, p. 192.

² *Sacred Philosophie*, Part II., p. 190.

concerning the resurrection. They are venerable records of Christian traditions, and they present at least one side of revealed truths. They may not always express all that we believe on the subject, nor sufficiently define what advancing time and more accurate science has rendered clear ; but they are in every case capable of a satisfactory interpretation, even where they seem at first sight to clash with the lessons here inculcated. We have seen that the unqualified assertion of a literal and entire resurrection of the flesh has been greatly modified by mediæval doctors, and that by this very modification they have made it absolutely necessary for every logical mind to depart still further from the doctrine of a carnal resurrection in its grosser shape. Yet this may be done without incurring the obloquy attached to a charge of heresy, and even without feeling any distress or difficulty in subscribing to ancient and approved formulas. The 'authentic' Council of Toledo, for example, in 675, says : 'Confitemur verâ fide resurrectionem carnis omnium mortuorum. Nec in aëriâ vel quâlibet aliâ carne, ut quidem delirant, surrecturos nos credimus, sed in istâ, quâ vivimus, consistimus, et movemur. Peracto hujus sanctæ resurrectionis exemplo, Dominus noster atque Salvator paternam ascendendo sedem repetiit.'¹ But these words will be no stumbling block to those who believe in the identity of the spiritual body with the flesh or body in which we now dwell, and who regard our Lord's resurrection as a strict type of their own. There is, of course, no difference in the sense when

¹ Denzinger, *Enchiridion*, 234.

'hujus' is joined with 'carnis,' as in several local forms of the Apostles' Creed ; or when the expression is varied thus, 'carnis quam nunc gesto ;' or thus, 'carnis quam gestamus et non alterius.' The fourth Lateran council says of Christ that 'descendit (ad inferos) in animâ, et resurrexit *in carne*,' not that He went and preached to the spirits in prison in His soul only, but in a spiritual body ; nor that He rose in His flesh only, but in His flesh spiritualised and harmonised with His spiritual body and His soul. That body was capable—and the Gospels show this abundantly—of being materialised and dematerialised at will, as we believe that ours will be after death.

Allusion has been made in a previous chapter to the Prælections of Perrone, in which that author declares that it is not necessary that all the molecules of the body should rise again, but that it is sufficient 'ut essentielles recuperentur corpori partes, quæ idem numero corpus constituunt, atque ab alieno quovis distinguunt ac secernunt.' But into what dreamland is the learned professor leading us ? What are these essential parts of the body which constitute its numerical identity and distinguish it from every other human body ? The parts which distinguish man from man are the accidents, as it were, of the body, its height, colour, form, age, imperfections, peculiarities—the very parts indeed which St. Thomas Aquinas assures us will be, or may be, eliminated. We see in such words the determination of the doctor of divinity to maintain his point at the cost of all physiological consistency. Science is to be swept away before the

breath of the divinity school like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor. The master gives up the atomic identity, and the disciple flings over everything except certain 'essential parts' which have no existence except in his own whimsical imagination. And if any 'essential part' of the frame we inter to-day could be preserved intact to the end of time, would it resemble the octopus which can reform its arms and tail by redintegration? The only 'essential parts' by which the identity of the natural and spiritual frame can be preserved is that spirit-body which survives the natural, and takes its form after a spiritual fashion. The doctrine of this spirit-body, and this doctrine alone, places a man at the centre of his subject and enables him to detect the fallacies and verbal tricks of the schools.

Perrone has not concealed the objections which are commonly urged against a carnal resurrection of all mankind. He mentions, for example, those grounded on cannibalism, on the constant change in the particles of the human body during life, and the surface of the globe not being spacious enough to contain all the resuscitated generations of men. But he takes it for granted as a first principle that the corpuscles of which our bodies are composed suffer no essential, but only an accidental, change, or series of changes, after death. '*Principia materiæ primigena, etsi diversam modificationem aut combinationem chemicam subeant, prorsus sunt in se incorruptibilia et indestructibilia. Hinc datâ etiam quâvis immeatione seu transitu de unâ in alteram substantiam, ipsa in se*

eadem omnino permanent, adeoque Deus semper ea poterit illi restituere, ad quem aliquo vitæ tempore pertinuerunt' (Prælectiones, vol. i. p. 626, § 679). But nothing can be more at variance with the well-known facts of chemistry. The substances of which our bodies are composed undergo, during the process of corruption, every kind of chemical change, and in chemical changes new substances are formed. When an acid combines with an alkali the result is a compound which is neither acid nor alkali. The foul gases generated in a dead body cannot pass into the air without having their very essence changed, nor again can they be respired by the lungs of living beings without acquiring a totally different character. The 'principia materiæ primigena' exist only in the minds of system-builders : we cannot be sure we have ever arrived at the smallest quantity of any substance ; and though the word atom, or molecule, is convenient and even invaluable for the purpose of teaching, it must not be supposed to express a scientific truth. Every so-called atom may be divided and subdivided *ad infinitum* till you arrive at vapour ; and vapour again in like manner till you arrive at the universal fluid, or ether : and the ether again till you arrive at force, or energy, which is matter's only base.

But supposing that the atoms of which we are materially composed were primitive and immutable, there would still be another huge difficulty in F. Perrone's doctrine, which he has carefully, and I should suppose designedly, avoided stating. If they become integral parts of the bodies of others, how can

they be reclaimed for any one without robbing the rest? How are rival claims extending over many, many ages to be adjusted? How are partial appropriators of vaporised atoms to be dealt with? How are the atoms chemically combined with minerals, plants, and the lower animals to be disentangled from their multitudinous complications? How are those who will remain alive at the end of the world to retain any bodies at all, since almost every particle of matter they possess will have belonged in some way or other to their innumerable predecessors in the long history of the human race? Does not the mind recoil before the monstrous absurdity of a general resurrection of the natural body under such conditions, and relieve itself by a smile at the ingenuity of credulous logicians?

As to the assertion made by the same doctor to the effect that 'it is uncertain whether our entire body really changes in a given space of time, or only certain elements,' and that the 'stamina primigenia,' 'which are composed of cellular tissue,' do not wear away and therefore are not renewed, I believe there is no physiologist of the least weight and eminence who would endorse it. At any rate F. Perrone is content with the expectation of '*a very few molecules*' of the original body at the resurrection, 'as it is probable that the bodies after the resurrection will require a less quantity of matter than mortal and passible bodies' (Prælectiones, 679).

But what if these 'paucissimæ moleculæ' are not to be found?

And here it ought to be particularly noted that the doctrine as explained by St. Thomas Aquinas and Perrone is a modification of that which was taught by some of the early Christians. They would have appeared innovators and trimmers to those who could maintain like Rufinus, quoted by St. Jerome, that our risen flesh 'shall be this very same, without the loss of *any* of its members, or the defect of *any* part of the body, unto which *nothing* of its nature shall be wanting except corruption.' . . . 'Hanc ipsam (carnem), nullo omnino ejus membro amputato, vel aliquâ corporis parte defectâ, sed cui nihil omnino ex omni naturâ suâ desit, nisi sola corruptio (Inter Opera Hieron. tom. ix. p. 159).' The teaching of St. Augustine, so far as I am able to understand it, seems to be a transition from the former to the latter of these modes of representing the future resurrection. It appears inconsistent with itself, and partakes of the earlier and the later endeavour to meet the difficulties of the case. Archbishop King, in his 'History of the Apostles' Creed,'¹ has glanced at the several views of Christian antiquity in relation to this subject, but he cannot be said to have studied them except in a superficial manner. After having laboured hard to establish a carnal resurrection in the most literal sense, he adds: 'But here it must be observed, that although the Fathers designed by this article (of the Creed) to declare the resurrection of the selfsame body; yet they always understood, that the qualities thereof should be changed and altered; that from mortal and

¹ P. 389-406. Edit. 1702.

corruptible, it should be immortal and incorruptible, and, as it may be called, become a spiritual body, that is, have no need of the supports of meat and drink for its reparation and sustenance ;¹ and in illustration of this self-contradictory statement he quotes some passages from St. Augustine, which are often adduced, but are in no degree more easy to comprehend and reconcile.²

CHAPTER XIV.

THOUGH I wish to write an Essay and not a sermon, it may be well to offer a few remarks on the influence which a consistent belief in the spiritual body is likely to produce on the Christian character. In the first place, then, it would foster an increased reverence for our natural bodies, and a more earnest endeavour to keep them free from the slightest stain of wickedness. The spirit-body being that attenuated substance which intermediates between the outer frame and the inner principle of thought, it has an alliance of the most intimate nature with each of the extremes of our being, and takes its shape and character from our body and mind. Every foul action of which we may be guilty tells with deteriorating effect on its sensitive structure, and it will after death retain in its own tissues the marks of our sin. This is a consideration which will bring home to a man more powerfully than the usual appeals a sense of the deep-dyed guilt and

¹ P. 404.

² *De Civitate Dei*, lib. xiii. c. xx. p. 30, and c. xxiii. p. 35.

fearful responsibility he incurs by defiling the temple of God, which temple we are. It is to be hoped that before many years have passed this doctrine will be taught to Christian children in their tenderest years, that so they may escape the corruption that is in the world, through the sins of the flesh, and may learn to look forward to the resurrection of their natural bodies in a spiritual form at the hour of death whenever it may arrive. No Christian child should be ignorant of the fact that the stains of sin reach from the grosser to the finer body within, and to the soul which informs them both.

A poet of distinction, whose father also was a poet, writing to me, says: 'I can recollect that as long ago as when I was a boy of fifteen my father once expounded to me his conception of the resurrection in a manner nearly the same as that which you have done in your poem. He had the same idea of a germ included within the present material body, but too initiate either to be ever detected, or to undergo that process of decomposition to which the "phenomenal" body is subjected. I have constantly recurred to that thought since; and it is the view of the resurrection on which I habitually dwell. It is but natural to suppose that this germ, and therefore the body one day to be developed out of it, may be affected for good or evil by every act, and even every thought, we may entertain through life, and that it may be built up especially by the blessed Eucharist. One can also easily imagine that it may be perfectly visible to the eyes of angels (as we see a landscape through a

mist), and that where we see but the decaying husk of the outward disguise, they see already the eternal youth and beauty to be.'

Such are the views which contribute powerfully to take away the sting from death. The spiritual Christians who entertain them will look forward to no metaphorical but a real vision of celestial persons and things. Their eyes will behold the King in His beauty ; they will see the land which has been described to them as so very far off. They will have an æsthetic perception of the glory that is to be revealed *in us*. The instincts of seers and poets have ever risen above dogmatic limitations, and have largely ascribed to the emancipated spirit the joys which are inseparable from bodily senses of a higher order than those that we now possess. It matters not by what name they may be called, Catholics and Swedenborgians, Anglicans and Independents, here meet on common ground, and attribute to the departed in the Lord space, time, motion, voice, and sight. I could quote in support of this assertion from monkish hymns, hymns of German reformers, Anglicans, and Nonconformists, especially Dr. Watts and the Wesleys, but the memories of all serious Christian readers are already stored with abundant proofs of a spiritual body being constantly implied in their poets' forecasts of our future existence after death.

It is to the idea of the spiritual body, floating vaguely in the minds of the great masters of Grecian and Roman literature, that we owe many of their grandest and most delicate conceptions. This idea

gave a consistent personality to the heroes and gods who entered into the machinery of their dramas and epics. They were spirits possessed of a certain corporeity, and, though created by the fervid imagination of poets, they serve to show that the notion of spirit-bodies is, in some shape or other, common to all mankind.

It has been a matter of dispute whether the hours of Muhammed's paradise are to be understood literally or allegorically ; but, strong as the arguments are on Major Osborn's side of the question,¹ it may be doubted whether the prophet was not unconsciously influenced by the idea of spiritual bodies, especially as he held distinctly that the djinns and angels were created of subtle fire. That he believed in a literal and material resurrection is certain, and, as the author just mentioned writes : ' Muhammed's doctrine is the exact opposite of St. Paul's ; it is flesh and blood which inherit *his* paradise ; ' yet I venture to think that even with Muhammed paradise was not earth, nor were the bodies of the faithful in paradise conditioned altogether like the bodies of men and women in Mekka.

I think it will be admitted on all hands that the fear of death enslaves the mind and weakens the character. It is natural to love life, and to desire for our own sake and that of others to prolong it to the utmost, but this natural and laudable clinging to life is compatible with a total absence of fear of death. Now putting aside considerations which affect the conscience and fear of judgment, let us ask what are the things

¹ *Islam under the Arabs*, pp. 32-38.

which make death fearful in itself, and apart from religious convictions. Surely they consist in the supposed utter separation of mind and body, the entrance into an unknown and untried state of things, without any analogy with our mortal life ; the being torn away from those we love, and deprived of all solid hope of ever seeing them again. Now the doctrine of the spirit-body here steps in, and with firm but gentle hand puts aside these unreasonable causes of fear. It assures us that death is not a separation of soul and body at all ; that, if it shakes off the outer and mortal coil, it fits around the immortal spirit more completely and satisfactorily than ever the attire—the panoply—of the spirit-body, which is in a certain and sufficient sense identical with the earthly body. Arrayed in this costume and endowed with this exquisite organisation, the soul will be borne into a condition of things more analogous with our present life than timid pilgrims of humanity have been wont to believe ; and so far from being torn away from their beloved ones, the departed will abide with them as near or far nearer than before, for their change will be one of state rather than of place. And as every spiritual body is the similitude of its earthly body, and corresponds to it in every particular after a spiritual manner, the mutual recognition of the departed may be expected as entirely of a piece with the goodness and kindness of God our Saviour, and as a boon to be obtained, if desirable for us, by faith and prayer. The habitual expectation of a resurrection immediately consequent on the extinction of animal life would, I believe, have a far

more practical and beneficial effect on the character than the vague surmise of an ill-defined, far-distant, and apparently impossible resurrection at the end of the world of a frame which long before that epoch will have become the common property of all,

In the third place an earnest belief in the spiritual body will have the effect of making Christians realise more fully their union with all that is around them and within them. They will feel more perfectly than they have felt hitherto, that they stand related to all that is external to themselves by a threefold correspondence. In their souls they are peculiarly related to the God of the spirits of all flesh ; in their spiritual bodies they have a special relation to the saints and angels who are also arrayed in spiritual frames ; and in their natural bodies they are related so intimately to the material universe that they derive their animal life from it now, they mix in all its operations by their respiratory and sudatory functions, and after death they will become a portion of the amazing machine whose phenomena are not only wonderful and beautiful in themselves beyond all description, but correspond to invisible and spiritual phenomena of which they are the outward and visible signs. Such a view of our own triple constitution, imbibed in childhood and matured by experience, would inevitably help to raise the mind and character from a natural to a spiritual level, and no one can attain to this higher degree of interior life without acquiring wider views and nobler aims. He must of necessity rise above the watchwords of party, conventional

falsehoods, and conventional truisms ; his sympathies will grow more comprehensive, and his habit of assimilating with his own system what is good and true and useful in other systems will be greatly confirmed. He will rely less on the dicta of fallible teachers, and confide more humbly in the Spirit that searcheth all things, even the deep things of God. The Christian faith has an ordeal to pass through more severe than any that are past ; and it is only by accommodating itself as far as possible to the new state of things, without sacrificing any of its own essentials, that it can hope to prevail over its adversaries, or even to maintain its own existence in the world.

CHAPTER XV.

THE distinction between the natural and the spiritual body was constantly in the mind of the Apostle Paul when he wrote, and of this there is much internal evidence in his Epistles. When, for instance, he 'comes (2 Cor. xii. 1) to visions and revelations of the Lord,' 'I knew a man in Christ,' he says, 'about fourteen years ago,' whether in the (natural) body I cannot tell, or whether out of the (natural) body I cannot tell : God knoweth ; such a one caught up to the third heaven (in his spiritual body). And I knew such a man, whether in the (natural) body or out of the (natural) body I cannot tell : God knoweth ; how that he was caught up into Paradise, and *heard* un

speakable *words*, which it is not possible for a man to utter. Of such a one will I glory.' The language here used implies, that in the vision that was vouchsafed him, his natural body may, or may not, have been levitated and spiritualised for awhile, but that his spiritual body certainly was borne into Paradise, for without it he could have *heard* and *seen* nothing, hearing and sight being bodily faculties. Pure spirit, as I have often said, is a myth. 'Matter and form,' as Dean Colet wrote nearly 400 years ago, 'are the elements of which all beings consist, even the very angels and the intelligible essences that are nearest to God. The fact of matter being an element in their nature is the cause of their potential existence.'¹

Many truths and clusters of truths were in the Apostle's mind which he has not propounded in his Epistles. He may have done so in his sermons, or his discourses with advanced and thoughtful disciples. There was always a prudent reserve in apostolic deliverances. St. Paul was willing to allow much to be inferred from his words; and it is the very nature of inspired composition to be highly suggestive—to enclose many meanings all equally true. He did not teach the doctrine of the Eucharist with the spiritual gloss which is now commonly given. He rather announced barely, that it was the communion of the body and blood of Christ, without meeting difficulties that might be started by declaring that he alluded to the presence of Christ's spiritual, and not His natural body. In like manner he leaves many inferences re-

¹ *Letters on the Mosaic Account of the Creation*, Letter II. p. 8.

specting the resurrection and the spiritual body to be drawn by devout students of Scripture without pressing them with dogmatic earnestness on individual belief. It seemed to him enough that Christians of his time should believe that in some way there would be a resurrection of the body ; that it would resemble the resurrection of Christ ; that after it Christians would be with their Lord in a state of spiritual corporeity, and that in that condition they would come again with Him to earth when He shall return according to His promise ; and that at His coming the living bodies of devout persons, and the dead bodies of those who will really be in the dust, will be spiritualised and caught up together in the clouds to meet their Lord in the air. This appears to have been the Pauline doctrine ; nay, we are sure that it was so ; and if it is in some particulars at variance with ordinary notions, it is nevertheless perfectly compatible with the professions of faith which have been received and retained by the several churches of Christendom. It is not put forward with any idea of antagonism, excepting to what is purely human, popular, fallible, and frail.

Mr. Matthew Arnold observes in his work on ' God and the Bible ' : ' Resurrection, the great word of the New Testament, never appears in the canonical books of the Old ; it appears in the Apocrypha.'

This leads me to remark that the resurrection doctrine of the New Testament was, beyond all doubt, a development far transcending that of the Old. Revealed religion had from the first followed the

order and process of development which seems to be universal. The patriarchal religion supplied the materials for the Mosaic, and the Mosaic for the Christian, which since its foundation has been in a constant state of evolution. There is a general tendency now to heighten and extend its spirituality without impairing its ceremonials, for all grounds of objection to these would be removed if they were found to contribute to the spiritual life. The natural body is itself a development from the vital germ fostered in the womb, and the spiritual body will, in like manner, develop itself out of the natural body. The office of this world of ours is to colonise the spiritual or ethereal regions, and the materials themselves of which these regions are constructed may be elaborated out of the atmospheres which surround our planet and other worlds to which we stand related. Considering how vast are the interstellar spaces, and how prolific nature is of life, it would be unreasonable to think that they do not, or at least that they may not, teem with intelligences which have existed previously in a lower and more densely material state.

Such intelligences, it should be remembered, though invested in bodies of far finer texture than ours, may be inferior to ourselves in happiness in consequence of defects in their moral condition, and inferior also in understanding from the same cause. And however they may surpass us in understanding, as they doubtless will surpass us immensely if their moral condition is high, they will still be finite creatures. They may, like ourselves, be utterly incapable

of seeing things as they are in themselves, not because they will be sentient, but because the thought of a finite intellect may never be able to reach so far.

The promises of the gospel and the faith of Christians are intimately bound up with the spiritual world, and without it the entire fabric of redemption crumbles into dust. It is admitted on all hands that Christ, having risen from the dead, has ascended in His glorified or spiritual body into a place variously described in Scripture as with the Father, on the right hand of the Father; as heaven, a temple, a city, a mountain, a paradise, a place of glassy seas, and fountains, and rivers, of fruit-bearing trees, white robes, waving palms, rest, psalmody, tearless enjoyment, and unfailing light. Every image peculiar to Hebrew imagination is employed to enhance its splendour; but the images are incoherent because they are subjective, and express rather the impressions made on the minds of devout evangelists, apostles, and seers, than objects to be apprehended by ordinary sense and described in ordinary language. In accepting them therefore into our hearts, we must dismiss every notion of physical accuracy. They are upon another and a higher plane. They belong to an order of things dissimilar to all that our eyes have seen and our hands have handled, except by way of analogy and correspondence. Does any one in his senses conceive that if he could travel from planet to planet and from star to star, he could find the throne of Christ or the court of the 'Regina Angelorum?' Can any but the most degraded understanding

descend into the bowels of the earth, and discover in its ocean of fire the souls and bodies of the lost tossed in waves of inconceivable agony, through ages without end? That those who die in their sins will awake up in them there cannot be a doubt, nor can any agony be imagined more terrible than that of a guilty conscience from which the light of God's countenance is withdrawn; but this torture will not be endured by any in literal smoke and brimstone, which would have no effect whatever on the bodies with which we shall be invested after death.

The place in which Christ reigns and the place in which the wicked suffer are places where no particle of human flesh can be found in unaltered conditions; they are places in altogether a different sense from that in which we usually employ the word. They are places and also states—places in reference to the spiritual bodies they contain, and states in reference to the spirits which animate those spirit-frames. Every passage in Scripture which speaks of the presence of a departed soul in this unseen world presupposes a spiritual body; and if you subtract this fundamental idea from it, you leave it a meaningless utterance of pious clap-trap. Without this leading idea of a spiritual corporeity you involve yourself and your hearers in endless obscurity and contradiction. The spiritual body of the Lamb that was slain is alone worthy to take the Book and open the seals thereof. It, and it only, is the Key of David, that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth. It will open to you the Scriptures as nothing else can open

them—disclosing their mystic meanings. It will in part open even the Revelations of which St. Jerome said: ‘Apocalypsis Joannis tot habet Sacramenta quot verba ;—parum dixi, in verbis singulis multiplices latent intelligentiæ.’¹

CHAPTER XVI.

MANY grave questions which have been discussed to little purpose by philosophers and scientists receive an easy solution by help of the doctrine of the spiritual body. Thus Brewster, Chalmers, Whewell, and Proctor have earnestly debated the existence or non-existence of life in other planets and heavenly bodies, without, as it would seem, ever taking into account the numberless forms which life, that is intelligent life, may assume. It is little to say that it may surpass in variety all other forms of life, animal or vegetable. Being conditioned in matter of every degree of rarity, it may exist in, upon, or around any planet or sun-star in any stage of its development. It may be wholly independent of such material centres, and be agglomerated around worlds in space of which our senses as at present constituted can take no account. Everything finite which we examine leads on to the infinite, and it may be with life as with matter, one kind may interpenetrate another without any collision or displacement. Supposing we could be admitted at this

¹ *Ep. ad Paulin.* t. iv. p. 574, Edit. Benedict.

moment in our spiritual bodies into the sphere to which they are adapted, and for which they are ultimately destined, the same might be true of that state which is true of our earthly condition ; it might be interpenetrated by higher and subtler forms of being invisible to the spiritual bodies that would seem to be the special and the sole occupants of the vast abode. And this superposition of one order of spiritual beings on another may be necessary for the existence and development of each.

With these views clearly impressed upon our minds, how futile is it to parade arguments against the sun's habitability, and to consider the circumstances unfavourable to the theory of Jupiter being the abode of life—the reduced supply of heat from the sun at the great distance of that planet, the small density of the planet, the deep atmosphere enveloping it, and the signs of disturbance indicating an intense heat in the planet's mass!¹ These circumstances, if ever so well established, have really nothing to do with the matter. They could only prove that Jupiter is not suited to human life, or to our particular form of human life. It would not even remotely affect the question of spiritual bodies and their life. They can exist in overflowing multitudes in our earthly atmosphere, as they were seen by Elisha (2 Kings vi. 17. Douay version, 4 Kings vi. 17). Yet we have no reason to suppose that the earth is better suited to their ethereal nature than Jupiter or the sun.

The Books of Kings will of course not be regarded

¹ R. A. Proctor, *Our Place among Infinities*, p. 36.

as evidence in the court of science, by those who reject the Scriptures as the voice of God. But these persons may find abundant witness to the truth of the spiritual body in other quarters. They may derive it from the reports of witnesses without number, whom they cannot charge with imposture or credulity. They are often friends or relations who have passed through the same mental discipline as themselves, have followed them in their researches, and perhaps lectured from the same chairs of philosophy and science. There never was a time, not even when Christianity in all its pristine might and splendour burst on the world, when abnormal phenomena of the kind here alluded to were more numerous, clear, and concurrent than they are now ; and scientific men and sceptics in general have the less excuse for disregarding their claims because they are not, generally speaking, connected with any proselytising movement of any kind. Though it is admitted on all hands that many of them are to be ascribed to imagination or fraud, though they are often allied with extravagant opinions and erroneous doctrines, though they frequently proceed from an evil source and have an evil tendency, they appear nevertheless to demand thoughtful investigation, and to call, like every other class of phenomena, for an inductive process.

The belief in spiritual bodies and regions suited to their special corporeity, relieves us of the perplexity into which many physicists have been thrown by the seeming wastes in nature. If each sphere or plane

of matter is needed as a basis for the superstructure of another of a finer description, then what appears to be waste will be answering a momentous purpose. The atmosphere which surrounds the earth and reaches above it some few miles may be essential to the outlying ether, and the many germs of life which appear to perish uselessly, may be contributing towards the production of ends far beyond our reach and imagination. One who was possessed of wonderfully intuitive faculties said, 'The end of the creation of the universe is, that the angelic heaven may exist.' There can be no waste of energy where none is lost, but only converted into energy of another kind.

There is one faculty of the spirit-body to which I have as yet but faintly alluded. It is that power which it possesses of projecting itself to a distance, and retaining its connection with the natural body by a cord of light. Such a projection gives rise to the many accounts which are given of bilocation, and it explains St. Paul's experience in being caught up into the third heaven. It was in this way that St. Alphonso Liguori assisted at the death-bed of Clement XIV. on September 21 and 22, 1774, while he remained, as to his body, in his armchair, perfectly motionless and without articulating a single word during a day and night.¹ It usually occurs when the mind is under special excitement, in a season of sickness, or through deep sympathy. It is sometimes dependent on the gradual loosening of the spirit when death is near at hand, or it may be owing to

¹ *Life of St. Alphonsus Liguori*, p. 416: New York, 1874.

a temperament peculiarly sensitive or psychic. The spirit-body, indeed, is but the psychic force in the concrete, and is sometimes called the astral body, the aura, the nerve-spirit, the atmospheric body, or the magnetic shape. That it does now and then manifest its presence outside of its more material tenement is a well-established fact, and not peculiar to any age or any system of belief. It is supported by the testimony of persons of every shade of opinion on matters connected with science and religion. I would not lay undue stress upon an individual case; but it cannot be altogether beside the mark to mention that there is a clergyman of the Church of England, now occupied all day long in teaching science and mathematics, who maintains in conversation, as he has maintained in print, that he is 'accustomed, not in solitary cases but in reiterated and frequent experiences, to a consciousness of separation from the physical body'¹ of which he has proofs to offer.

When the damsel, named Rhoda, opened not the gate for gladness at the deliverance of Peter from prison, but ran in and told how Peter stood before the gate, 'they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is his angel.'² They seem to have thought it was Peter's 'double,' because it came in his perfect likeness. They seem to have believed that the spirits of men have the power of going forth on occasion from the body and making their presence evident to

¹ *Transcendental Action of Spirit*, by M.A. (Oxon.), p. 8.

² Acts xii. 15.

friends. Nor are we without abundant evidence of the spirit, that is the spiritual body, possessing and exercising this faculty. It is impossible to calculate the number of minds which have been influenced for good by personal experience of it, and even by hearing or reading narratives which confirm its truth. They have been led by such means to more seriousness, to a deeper faith in what is called the supernatural, and a more abiding sense of their own immortality. Even the ghost stories told by the winter's firelight, when the storm is howling among the hills and the forest-branches crack, are not without benefit to the character. They may in some cases only make the skin creep and render the mind timid and superstitious, but more frequently they tend to deepen faith and foster feelings of reverence and awe.

The very glories and splendours of such revelations as the doctrine here insisted on comprises are, with some persons, an obstacle to their acceptance. They cannot support too much light. They shrink from an apocalypse which is too multiform, too big with hope and blessing. They are like Tycho Brahé, who would not accept the Copernican system because it would reduce the earth and the sun to mere points of light when seen at a distance. What would he have said if he had been told that the sun himself is inferior in size to Sirius by many thousand times?

It is least of all from Roman Catholics that apparitions of the spiritual body ought to be met with opposition and scoffing. At the very time I am writing, a placard is affixed to the doors of their

churches and chapels in London, announcing the Feast of the Portiuncula at the convent of the Poor Clares, and it is there affirmed—what is familiar to all who read the ‘Lives of the Saints’—that Jesus Christ Himself appeared to St. Francis of Assisi to grant him (it would have been more accordant with history¹ to say, to bid him obtain from the Pope, Honorius III., the grant of) the famous indulgence of the Portiuncula. Although no Roman Catholic is obliged to believe this, it would be thought irreverent to deny or doubt it. Yet to what does it amount, but that our Lord sometimes appears on earth in His spiritual body; and if He, why not also His saints and others of the departed?

CHAPTER XVII.

BEFORE closing these introductory remarks, I think it will be better to avoid all misconception by summing up what I have said on the subject in propositions as concise as I can frame.

1. We do *not* sow in the earth the body that will rise from the dead.—1 Cor. xv. 37.

2. The natural body is sown, but it is the spiritual body that rises.—1 Cor. xv. 44.

3. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God except under altered conditions.

4. There is even now in each of us a natural and a spiritual body, which last will rise from the grave

¹ Alban Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, vol. x. p. 94, *note*.

of the natural body, like a germ from its perisperm, at the moment of death, and will preserve the identity of the former body under altered conditions.—1 Cor. xv. 37, 38, 44

5. Those who have already thus risen will come with Christ in their spirit-bodies and meet 'in the air' those who will be alive and remain unto His second advent; and these last will be changed, as if by death, without dying, into the like spiritual form.—1 Thess. iv. 14-17. This is the rising again of all men with their bodies of which the Athanasian creed speaks; for though what has just been said applies specially to the good, it must be remembered that the wicked also have their spiritual bodies.

This belief is opposed to the common ideas of the resurrection in two respects.

1. It rejects the notion of the spirits of the departed being altogether incorporeal.

2. It rejects the notion of the natural body being preserved till the last day except in an atmospheric condition, since we all know that it does not remain long in the grave, that it is soon vaporised and forms part of the nutriment of plants, animals, men, women, and children, generation after generation; and that it could not be reclaimed for one individual without taking from the bodies of innumerable others. We must not allow our physical reasoning to be subject to the conditions of nature the body which has passed beyond them and has become a spirit-body. Nothing, however, is here predicated of those bodies—few indeed compared with the whole human race—which

will be in their graves when Christ shall come again. They demand a separate consideration.

There appears to be in many quarters a dread of allowing a discussion of this nature to come before the public. But such a fear is only an indication of the interest which the subject possesses and the inquiry it is certain to excite. It equally concerns all classes of Christians, and deals with those mysteries of our being which have always been man's deepest and fondest study. To obstruct it for a moment is only to increase its vitality in the end. If it threatens to modify our ideas of the resurrection, it promises to do so without unsettling one of the foundations of the Christian faith. It promises even more—to remove with pious hand from the Christian programme an expectation which science rejects as impossible and absurd, and thus to conciliate the allegiance and love of many who have been recently more and more alienated from it. Some opposition must be expected in bringing forward this question prominently ; but if it comes from any captious opponent, and particularly if he wears the priestly garb, I would say in words that admit of an easy application : *Est mihi tecum pro aris et focus certamen, et pro deorum templis atque delubris, proque urbis muris, quos vos, pontifices, sanctos esse dicitis, diligentiusque urbem religione, quàm ipsis mœnibus cingitis : quæ deseri à me, dum quidem spirare potero, nefas judico.*¹ The Catholic Church does not require her children to believe that the human body will rise *entire* at the last day. St.

¹ Cic. *de Nat. Deorum*, III. 40.


Thomas and Perrone, for example, in passages already referred to, say distinctly that it will not. But if it will not rise entire, and, still more, if it will not have animal life, then its material identity is given up, and identity of another kind is predicated of it. Any of the changes which St. Thomas regards as admissible in the risen body, as compared with the body at the time of death, would alter its entire structure ; reducing a giant, for instance, to an average height, or an old man to one in the prime of life. There would no longer be any absolute identity in a corporeal sense. And this concession being made, it is impossible to charge anyone with heresy who denies that the same body which was buried will rise at all in a strictly material signification. He who does so deny has the authority of a sainted doctor of the Church to back him in effect, though not in so many words. It is strange that any in our day should contest this, seeing that the Apostle's language is so express and clear. 'It is sown a natural body : it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.' In all that I have written I have endeavoured to develop what seems to me to be the true, and in a right sense liberal, philosophy of the Catholic religion. That the deposit of the faith admits of development is a recognised principle, and it is obvious that the Scriptures contain mines of truth which have as yet been imperfectly explored. As in the sixty-four elementary bodies which chemistry has discovered there are possible combinations that have not yet been formed, so in the Bible there are passages—allusions,

hints, coincidences, prophecies, types—which will hereafter enter,*as it were, into new combinations, and, by the aid of fuller experience, so illustrate and explain each other as to exhibit truths previously unknown.

The doctrine of the spiritual body, however, is nothing new. It was taught and believed long ago in Sweden and Germany, and has latterly been revived in many countries of Europe and in the United States. It may be found in the works of John Locke, Dr. Henry More, Bishop Newton, Dr. Justinus Kerner, Frederic von Schlegel, Archbishop Whately, Bishop Watson, Dr. Burnet, Dr. Kitto, the Rev. Dr. Burton, Isaac Taylor, Sir Humphry Davy, Professor Johnson, and in the present day, the Hon. and Rev. W. H. Lyttelton, Canon Perowne, the Rev. B. W. Savile, the Rev. Malcolm MacColl, the Rev. Prof. Grimley, the Rev. Aug. Clissold, the Rev. T. M. Gorman, the Rev. J. Page Hopps, Serjeant Cox, the Rev. E. H. Sears, and E. S. Phelps, the authoress of 'The Gates Ajar.' It is illustrated in many books in which imagination and science are mixed in nearly equal proportions, as in the 'Récits de l'Infini,' and 'Le Lendemain de la Mort.' But I would especially direct attention to the sermon on the Spiritual Body by Prof. Grimley, in his recently published volume of Tremadoc Sermons. The matter is there presented in a persuasive form by a delicate and masterly hand. The Duke of Argyll writes in his 'Reign of Law,' 'The Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body sanctions and involves the notion that there is

some deep connection between spirit and form which is essential, and which cannot be finally sundered even in the divorce of death.' The Earl of Southesk, in his clever poem 'Jonas Fisher,' has ably exposed the absurdity of popular notions on the subject of the resurrection. The Rev. Prebendary Gleig, late Chaplain General to the Forces, and now past his eightieth year, writes in his 'Great Problem. Can it be solved?' 'That soul and body once separated should ever come together again is for obvious reasons impossible.' 'The doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, treated as popular theology treats it, will not bear a moment's grave consideration.' Clerical friends assure me that, so far as their experience goes, no clergyman of thought and culture in the Church of England now believes in a carnal resurrection of the particles left behind at death. The doctrine of a spirit-body resurrection is steadily gaining ground. It is tacitly held by many clergymen and private individuals, scattered in various Christian communities; several Catholic priests, among my own friends, have avowed to me their belief in it; and it is sometimes faintly alluded to in books confessedly orthodox; but it is here, so far as I know, for the first time rescued from extraneous surroundings and set in the framework of ancient dogma. A few articles on the subject written by me recently in a Catholic periodical have excited some interest, and seemed likely at one time to lead to a public controversy. An ecclesiastic standing high in general estimation proposed to translate my propositions into Latin, and submit

them to the Sacred Congregation at Rome,—a proceeding to which, of course, I could have no objection, provided it were done by suitable hands and at a proper season. But I desire in the first instance to see the question thoroughly canvassed in that intelligent and dispassionate manner which is becoming more common among us. When the idea of the spiritual body was first suggested to me, it broke on my mind like a flash of heavenly light; and now that I have brooded over it for years, it seems to me the true and only solution of many Scriptural, theological, and scientific difficulties. It displaces no stone in the edifice of Christian doctrine, but gives unity and consistency to the entire building. It breaks through the doors closed against it, and stands in the midst of other doctrines as Christ in His spiritual body stood in the midst of His disciples, saying, ‘Peace be unto you.’ It was in the Christian Church from the beginning potentially, or in germ, and no power of man can now arrest its growth. It stands in the same relation to the old doctrine of the resurrection as oxygen did when first discovered by Priestley and Scheele to the now exploded figment of phlogiston. It develops the true idea from the imperfect one which was designed to lead up to it. It is still the doctrine of the resurrection of the body; and there will be no more difficulty in its superseding the older doctrine than there was in the undulatory theory of light as taught by Huyghens, prevailing over the corpuscular theory which was backed by the authority of Newton. It is not to be supposed that it should meet with immediate



acceptance. It will have to encounter doubt, indifference, ridicule, and rude opposition. The most rigorous tests will be applied to it, and destructives will no doubt often rejoice prematurely over its extinction. But I feel sure that it will gradually commend itself to one mind after another among those who are versed in the Scriptures, and who weigh cautiously the spiritual phenomena of past and present times. The private judgment which is brought to bear on it will, for reasons already stated, be lawfully exercised, and nothing but good can follow the discussion, if it be carried on fairly and temperately, with an earnest desire of arriving at just conclusions.

With this preface I now beg leave to introduce the reader to my poem, in which the ideas I wish to communicate are expressed more completely and at the same time more concisely than they would be in prose.

J. C. E.

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THE
SPIRITUAL BODY

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I. IMMORTAL FORM.

IMMORTAL life implies immortal form,
Else could we never hope to find a *place*
Of peace and reparation after storm,
Nor *see* the world's Redeemer face to face.

Whatever promises of life He gave—
Of life beyond this vestibule—imply
That none of those He came to seek and save
In *body* or in soul can ever die.

No, not one instant will He suffer Death
To triumph o'er the work of His own hands.
The natural body draws its last, last breath,—
Lo, in its place the spirit-body stands !

II. CHRIST'S SPIRIT-BODY.

WHERE did Thy Spirit-Body, Jesu, go,
When they had laid Thee in Thy stony tomb?
Did it not solace other shapes of woe,
And shine away expectant prisoners' gloom ?

Did it not range through fields of light unseen,
 And welcome there the thief, who on the cross
 Had prayed Thee to remember him—had been
 Companion of Thy torture, shame, and loss ?

And are we not in all things like to Thee,
 (X Our Brother and the First-born from the dead?)
 Shall not our spirit-bodies likewise flee
 Straight where Thou willest from the dying bed ?

III. CHRIST'S SPIRIT-BODY THE TYPE OF OURS.

THE laws of human bodies still remain
 Occult in part, but as experience grows
 Their powers develop. What was dark is plain,
 And that which science only guessed, she knows.

But how much less than little can we know
 Of those strange spirit-bodies, which divide
 Departed souls from all around them, so
 That each by each may be identified.

Yet in the record of Thy spotless days
 Before and after death, O Master dear,
 The studious eye detects no fitful blaze
 Of truth, but starry lights on lights appear.

Thy risen Body points to various laws ;
 Thy risen Body as a type we take
 Till death-sleep round our life the curtain draws—
 Till in Thy likeness satisfied we wake.

all those who died before Christ,
 from the dead before He did.
 Then is He "First-born from the dead"

IV. *CHRIST'S SPIRIT-BODY RECOGNISABLE.*

WHATEVER beauty in His person glowed,
Whatever dignity of form and grace
Of gesture, when the Man of Sorrows trode
On thorns with purpose fixed from place to place,

That beauty, majesty, and sweetness shone
Forth from His face when He appeared again,
Set free from death, alike in look and tone,
Yet something more than man, with fellow men.

How often in their hearts the question rose,
'Is this indeed the Jesus whom we knew?
Are these His wonder-working hands? Are those
The lips whose accents list'ning myriads drew?

'Is that the bosom on which John reclined?
Are those the eyes that over Salem wept?
Is this the voice that hushed the howling wind,
And made the billows sleep as He had slept?

'It is our Cross-enthroned, our risen, Lord—
The form familiar yet divinely changed—
Transfigured on a higher mount, adored,
Yet from His brethren in nowise estranged.

'But, oh! how widely different laws preside
O'er all the movements of His wondrous frame,
Oh, into what a mystic life He died,
And altered that He might be still the same!'

V. CHRIST'S SPIRIT-BODY MYSTERIOUS.

HE burst at will on His disciples' gaze,
And when He would He vanished out of sight,
And often eyes were holden, lest the blaze
Of too much deity should blind with light.

He passed through closed doors like viewless wind ;
He bore the scars and wounds of cross and nail ;
He ate the fish and honey like His kind,
And from the shore observed the fishers sail ;

He spread His mantle on the liquid air,
And slowly rose into His regal rest ;
And many problems hard to solve are there
With Him deep hidden in His awful breast.

For who can follow those mysterious ways,
Or His unearthly steps reduce to rule ?
A body like to His alone can raise
Our minds to grasp them in a higher school.

*VI. CHRIST'S SPIRIT-BODY : ITS VARIOUS MODES
AND ASPECTS.*

THE fellow travellers of Saint Paul beheld
Christ's Body panoplied in blistering light :
He only heard the voice. His hate was quelled,
His soul converted by the vision's might.

And since the hour when Saul of Tarsus saw
And heard Emmanuel on the Syrian way,
How many saints have bowed their heads with awe
Before Him manifested clear as day!

Are all the histories of ardent love
And penitence sincere to which He deigned
A sunbeam of His presence from above—
Are all, all, legends, falsehoods, visions feigned?

Has He not, then, reserved in His own hands
The times and seasons when He will appear,
Impose on suplicants His beloved commands,
Or with Himself revealed their anguish cheer?

Shall He who made the widowed Church His wife
In person never take immediate part
In all that most concerns her inner life,
And never bare again His sacred heart?

Is faith so feeble that it cannot trust
To any witness less than saint inspired?
As if Christ's presence in the Body must
Be limited by laws of sense required.

VII. ST. TERESA'S VISIONS OF THE GLORIFIED BODY.

WHY doubt Teresa any more than Paul
Saw Him Who is the same to-day as then,
And knows not any lapse of time at all
Save as a weak device of mortal men?

Were all the visions of her silent cell
Delusions of a crazed and sickly brain ?
Or did her gaze in fear and rapture dwell
Upon the very Lamb that had been slain ?

I see not why we should reject her tale,
Or doubt she saw the Body that extends
Far as He wills its substance should avail
To bring about His gracious, glorious ends.

Clear water running o'er a crystal bed,
And smitten by a sunbeam, would be dim
Compared with that soft brightness which He shed :
That perfect quietude of light in Him.

Yet not with eyes of flesh did she behold
The face and hands so beautiful, the form
More bright than diamonds or burnished gold,
More fair than rainbows o'er a cataract's storm,

More lucid than the beryl, onyx, pearl,
Or stalactite dependent in a cave
Wherein the dark blue whispering waters curl,
Or coral branching 'neath the sea-green wave.

No, not to eyes of sense did He declare
His majesty and splendour. 'Twas her soul
That saw Him unimaginably fair,
And from a fraction feebly guessed the whole.

And with Him ofttimes she reviewed His saints
In glittering phalanx or on golden thrones
Such as the favoured seer of Patmos paints,—
Their foreheads garlanded with costly stones,

You doubt ; you smile ; you scoff. Yet this and more,
I think should in all reason be confessed,
Is now and will be and had been before
Within the experience of some human breast.

VIII. *CHRIST'S SPIRIT-BODY IN THE EUCHARIST.*

THE Spiritual Body of the Lord
Upon the altar offered, and indeed
Present in substance, eaten and adored—
This is our base of worship and of creed.

That Body would suffice to be the food
Of worlds as frequent as the stars of heaven,
And bring to all the virtue of the Rood
If fallen, ransomed freely and forgiven.

That Body is not bound by laws of space,
But permeates fleeter far than waves of light
All grosser forms that intercept its grace,
And seem to question its transcendent right.

It underlies the mystic bread and wine
Which have no real substance of their own,
And makes them vehicles of life divine
To members of His body, flesh, and bone.

That Body therefore upon bended knee
We worship as the Christ, who is its breath,
Who raised it by almighty power, that we
May in like wise elude the grasp of death.

We eat the blessed eucharistic bread,
And, eating, of the Lord Himself partake,
And deep within where soul and body wed
Our perfect mystical communion make.

IX. *SINE LABE CONCEPTA.*

No language ever can exhaust the praise
Of the dear mother of the Incarnate Word ;
No worthy witness of her virtuous ways
From mortal messenger was ever heard.

Alone upon a pure and virginal height,
The one exception to her fallen race,
And robed from first to last in hidden light,
She lived a life of unresisted grace.

She was the nest in which the Heavenly Dove
Brooded and brooded, till the hour arrived
When in her frame an embryo from above,
At once her Son and her Creator, thrived.

No pearl in the Pacific deep so pure
And spotless as her young and tender heart,
Which evil rife around her could allure,
But ne'er to it one stain of sin impart.

Her body from all taint ancestral free
Was ever as an angel's fresh and sweet ;
Nor God Himself by other modes could see
How He should make the chosen vessel meet

For that stupendous purpose He designed—
How otherwise a temple could be built
Fit for the promised High Priest of mankind,
Fit for the Lamb whose blood was to be spilt.

X. *THE ASSUMPTION.*

O MARY, spotless in thy life and death,
Did thy dear son desert thee in the grave?
Did He who drew from thee His mortal breath
Stretch out no arm thy pallid corpse to save
From foul corruption? Flower of Eden, flower
O'er which the trailing serpent never crept,
Did He not stoop from heaven in that hour
The progress of decay to intercept
And pluck thee, withering in the dust, to bloom
Beside Him in the Eden of His love,
The Saron rose, the lily of the tomb,
Transplanted to the banks and streams above
To flourish there in sur-abounding grace,
The fragrant blossom of those cloudless skies,
The queen of angels in that happy place,
The crowning ornament of Paradise?
O Mary, mother, from this vale of tears
We lift our longing, trustful eyes to thee.
Thy body throned and spiritualised appears
The type and pledge of what we hope to be.

XI. 'WE SHALL BE CHANGED.'

THAT which He did for Mary, Christ will do
To all when He Himself shall re-appear—
To all who love Him with fond hearts and true,
And hail His glorious advent without fear.

We shall not in that moment all be changed
Though all shall rise again.¹ The saints of yore,
The generations which the earth have ranged,
And perished, will have proved *their* change before.

Firm as a rock Christ's gracious promise stands,
That He will bring again the saints that slept
The sleep of peace, and woke in higher lands
Of neither feeling, thought, nor sense, bereft—

That He will bring them in those forms of light,
Those spirit-bodies seen by many a seer,
To swell His march of triumph and unite
Their radiant hosts with saints expectant here,—

That they, who to His coming yet remain
Alive on earth, shall in a moment feel
His spiritualising power divine constrain
Their being into something new, and steal

Through every pulse and fibre, till the life,
Magnetic and ethereal, conquers all
The elements of matter-breeding strife
And pain incessant, and shall disenthral

¹ Corinth. xv. 51, Douay version.

And spiritualise the body wrought of clay,
And make it meet to range untrodden spheres,
Inform it with the light of endless day,
And chase away all trace of earthly tears.

XII. *MEETING THE LORD IN THE AIR.*

O GRAND convention in the glowing air !
O rapturous meeting in the clouds what time
The Lord of life will gather round Him there
The holy ones of every age and clime !

O varied bliss of interstellar space,
Of ether by ethereal beings kept
As pleasure grounds about the courts of grace,
By wings of ever-watchful angels swept !

Come, Jesu, quickly come. Thy saints desire
Thy presence to revive their drooping powers.
Come, bathe them in Thy Spirit's solvent fire,
And give them rest in amaranthine bowers.

XIII. *THE DEPARTED NOT MERE SPIRITS.*

'TIS true the coming of the Lord draws nigh,
Yet who can tell *when* He will come again—
So many thousand years have glided by
Since toiled upon this earth the race of men ?

Think you that many hundred thousand years
Will slide away while faithful souls must wait
Incompetent of action in those spheres
Where all are with activity elate ?

That they will slumber in a vacant dream
As isolated essences ; defy
All definition, scrutiny, and seem
Negations blank of personality ;

Unseen by any ; seeing, feeling none ;
More unsubstantial than the viewless air ;
Disorganised ; disfranchised ; nude ; undone ;
Spirits of spiritual matter bare ?

Imagination strange, uncouth, unwise ;
Unworthy of a compound child of clay ;
Unknown to Scripture ; alien to the skies !
Not spirits merely, spirit-bodies they.

XIV. *AN ORGANISM INDISPENSABLE.*

THERE was a pontiff once who held and taught
That till the rising at the Lord's return
The souls into the heavenly city brought
Would for His beatific vision yearn.

But ere the sleep of death his eyes had sealed
He cast the error from him, and confessed
Departed saints will see the Lord revealed,
And with that vision be supremely blest.

For how should naked spirits gaze on form ?
How, sightless, see the glory of their King ?
How feel, unless a vital pulse be warm,
Or be aware of any outward thing ?

XV. CHRIST'S WITNESS AS TO THE SPIRIT-BODY.

THE Son of God, who down from Heaven came
And oped to earth the secrets of the air,
He above all knew how to sort and name
The earth-born spirits emigrating there.

But if we pass with Him behind the veil,
While here and there a flickering beam He throws
O'er tracts immense where tortured sufferers wail,
Or captives sigh or conquerors repose,

We soon shall learn if that ulterior state
Be simply one of silent abstract thought,
Or if the shades that pass the shuddering gate
Of death are clothed indeed in garments wrought

Of subtler matter than our doctors ween,
And tissues woven in far different looms
From those which serve to prank this mortal scene
With raiment broidered for the mouldering tombs.

We soon shall learn, for He will not deceive
Nor on His prophets and apostles shed
A spirit of delusion. We believe
As truth eternal every word He said.

XVI. LAZARUS AND DIVES.

COME, then, and listen to Messiah's voice
While of the world beyond the world He speaks :
He tells of Lazarus—lazar of His choice,
And Dives' dreadful secret open breaks.

The beggar dies, and angels swoop on wings
Expanded, bearing him to Abram's breast,
And he is comforted with heaven's 'good things,'
And Dives in remorseful fires distressed.

'O ! Father Abram, send him to my home,'
He cries, 'O send him to my brethren five,
Lest they into this place of torment come,
Let him rise from the dead to them alive.'

Here all is sight and motion. Here *return*
From Hades is a *rising* from the dead ;
And here recondite lessons we may learn
About the state of those who hence have sped.

We see them gifted with a twofold life,
A life of spirit and a life of form :
They move, they speak, in brotherhood or in strife ;
They rest in peace or toss in penal storm.

XVII, *THE APPARITION OF SAMUEL TO SAUL.*

THERE was a witch in Endor ; gods she saw
Ascending out of earth before the King,
And Saul, who feared not thus to break the Law,
Nor held familiar sprite a cursèd thing,
Asked, ‘ What is Samuel’s *form* ? ’ and she replied,
‘ O King, an old man cometh up ; he wears
A mantle ; he is even at thy side,
Thou knowest well the face and shape he bears.
And Saul perceivèd Samuel and adored,
And bowed him low unto the ground, and heard
Reproach from that anointed prophet poured
Upon his head, and shuddered at each word.
And can you read that history and doubt
That dead men may return to earth ; that they
Have forms, and are with raiment wrapt about ;
And wear the semblance of their previous clay ;
That they appear to *rise* who come again
From realms unseen, commissioned from on high
To fortify the staggering faith of men
And prove the world of spirits very nigh ?
If Testaments both Old and New combine
To teach the corporal adjuncts of the dead,
Are you not subject to the word divine ?
Must you not credit what your Lord has said ?

XVIII. *THE SCALE OF MATTER GRADUATED.*

As from the lowest polyp up to man
In graduated scales the creatures rise,
So in the universal cosmic plan
Ascending scales of matter fill the skies,
From grossest offal trampled in the sod
Up to the fine and keen seraphic flames
That glance around the central thrones of God,
And tune their tongues of fire to shrill acclaims.
All-Father, in Thy works no gap is found.
With measured step Thou marchest on Thy way
Creative, making all things holy ground,
And bidding all Thy footprints clear display.

XIX. *THE APOCALYPSE.*

HE who reclined upon His Saviour's breast,
What time the Paschal feast before them spread,
Was favoured even more than all the rest
With visions of the future and the dead—
With visions that were verities divine,
For in the truthful Spirit they were seen,
And when recorded He o'er every line
Presided lest untruth should intervene.

And though from very brightness they were dark
At times to John himself, and though we still
Revere them as the manna in the ark
Laid up and hid, they must themselves fulfil.

One thing, however, in the scroll is plain,—
Though through the courts and palaces on high,
The cities where victorious athletes reign,
The Edens where the summers never die,

The prophet ranged,—though life of every kind
In worlds yet unexplored was, to his eyes
Clairvoyant, pictured, and upon his mind
Imprinted with the types of paradise,—

He never writes as if the heaven and hell
He saw were figures merely, fancies, tropes,
Unreal objects acting like a spell
And cheating with false shapes fond Christian hopes ;

He never speaks as if the saints in white
Were merely spirits having nought to do
With space and time, but living lights in light,
Incorporate and spiritual too.

XX. *THE VISION MATERIALISTIC IN PART.*

THE golden girdle and the feet like brass,
Fine brass as in a furnace burning, and
The sound of many waters ; seas of glass ;
Rivers of crystal watering all the land ;

Armies upon white horses ; linen fine
And white and clean, with elders ; crowns of gold ;
Vials of odours full ; ambrosial wine,
And palms, and raiment dazzling to behold ;
And pipes and dulcet harps of divers tones ;
And hymns and jubilee in jasper halls ;
And sapphires, amethysts, and precious stones
Of price untold, and lofty twelve-gate walls ;
And tents and mountains high, and golden streets,—
Do these not indicate substantial form,
A *place* no less than state, where virtue meets
Reward in life with breath and colour warm ?

XXI. 'GOD GIVETH IT A BODY AS HE WILL.'

BUT how do spirits weave that texture rare
In which they float upon the ether waves,
Glide in and out of our inferior air
And flash at will through darkest dens and caves ?
Go, ask the blossom whence it caught its bloom :
The flower will send you back to ask the seed ;
And there alone you find the pregnant womb
From which such beautiful results proceed.
You are yourself the germ, the egg, the plan
Yet undeveloped of your future frame :
You have within you deep a second man,
And you will be another, yet the same.

They tell us that a hidden psychic force—
A fluid atmosphere around the nerves—
Transmits the will along their sinuous course,
And every vital energy subserves.

And there, if we mistake not, is the seat
Of that imponderous growth in which, we trust,
The pulse of our magnetic life will beat
When this frail tenement resolves in dust.

O flower immortal, grow within us, grow
And ere long put forth stalk and stem and bloom
More flame-like than the crocus from the snow,
More fragrant than the violet from the tomb!

XXII. *OCCULT BODILY FACULTIES.*

WHEN Moses down the Sinai mountain came,
And brought th' engraven tables of th' Law,
His countenance so shone with lambent flame
The people shrank with mingled fear and awe.

When Stephen 'full of faith and power' addressed
The council, all who gazed upon his face,
And saw its spiritual light confessed
Him like to one of the angelic race

And when the Lord upon Mount Tabor showed
His glory forth, His face and robes were turned
Into a blaze of majesty, and glowed
With somewhat of the God that in Him burned.

How oft the Spirit of the Lord has caught
The saints of the Old Testament and New,
Borne them aloft, and, swift as light, or thought,
Transported them far out of human view.

Elias, Philip, and Ezechiél, held
In angel hands, were wafted through the air,
By power supreme, by ardent zeal, impelled,
By faith unwavering and the might of prayer.

The walks in sleep, the fasts of forty days
And more, as annals of our time record,
Magnetic effluence, and prayers that raise
From earth the kneeling suppliants of the Lord,

And trance and vision, second sight and dream,
And flights in air, evasions angel-led,
And natural acts that supernatural seem,
And apparitions of the mindful dead,—

All prove how many latent powers reside
In mortal bodies, and inspire the hope
That ours will be expanded and supplied
With strength to break the bonds with which they
cope.

XXIII. *'CLOTHED UPON WITH OUR HABITATION
THAT IS FROM HEAVEN.'*

FOR we who in this tabernacle groan,
'Groan, being burthened,' not that we would throw
Aside our clothing, but be clothed upon
With mantles whiter than sun-smitten snow.

For if our fragile earthen house should fall,
Collapsing in the dust from whence it rose,
'We *have*, we know, a building' over all
The ruin, and our nakedness has clothes.

Can any words make plainer what is meant—
Plainer alike to simple folk and sage?
The Scriptures read with faith intelligent
Reveal the spirit-form in every page.

XXIV. *THE BUTTERFLY.*

THE shell is broken—'tis the chrysalid's grave,
The cradle of the butterfly, whose wings
Are soon unfolded and alert to brave
The breeze and dart into all nectared things.

How beautiful with countless tiny scales,
That look like down upon the wings outspread,
She ranges o'er the meads, and trips and sails
To every saccharine cup of blue and red!

How gorgeous are those dyes : no Eastern king
Ablaze with jewels can be half as bright.
A life of sunshine ; an unwearied wing ;
An everlasting banquet of delight !

O butterfly, sweet symbol of the soul—
A Christian emblem due to Grecian art—
Thy meaning is not yet known as a whole,
For purblind men have learnt it but in part.

Fair Psyche of the scented clover croft,
Thou art the spirit-body's loveliest type ;
A chrysalid yesterday, to-day aloft
Thou soarest for refined enjoyment ripe.

A lower grade of life was late thine own ;
And all the grace of thine enamelled wings
In embryo lay grovelling and unblown
Within the caterpillar's creeping rings.

XXV. *ARE THE DEPARTED NEAR ?*

AND is thy new home very far away,
Departed spirit of my brother dear ?
And didst thou travel rapid as a ray
Of light to some yet undiscovered sphere,

There to complete repentance or begin
Perennial jubilee ? I cannot dream
Thou art so distant from this world of sin
As many of my fellow-thinkers deem.

I rather hold thee to be very nigh—
Nigh as the circumambient vital air—
That thou canst listen to the secret sigh
And mingle sympathising prayer with prayer.

For what have spirits freed to do with space,
In any sense familiar to our thought ?
The denizen of Hades knows no place
Whose bounds in any science school are taught.

The spheres of ether lie beneath, around,
The planets and the stars of denser mould,
And there thy recent habitat is found,
And there thy faculties occult unfold.

And thou, O earth, who rollest on thy way
Around the central magnet-orb of fire,
Thou peoplest ether with the souls that stay
Still near us, yet to height on height aspire.

XXVI. *CREMATION.*

BUT in the natural body other germs
Of life lie hidden. Millions wait the hour
Of putrefaction to come forth as worms
And subject beauty to their loathsome power,

And breed a cloud of pestilential air,
And decompose and into gases solve
The form and features once so fresh and fair,
And in a ghastly muck their pride involve.

Hence some have deemed it best to burn the dead,
To lay them reverently upon the pile,
With chanted prayers and hymns, or masses said,
Or words of hope and comfort preached the while ;

Then gather up their ashes, and inurn
In gold or porcelain vase their precious dust
As heir-looms which the wild winds will not spurn
Nor worm will gnaw, nor moth corrupt, nor rust.

XXVII. *THE DEAD BECOME THE FOOD OF
THE LIVING.*

BUT howsoe'er these bodies may decay,
Tossed in the sea or calcined in the flame,
Buried or made of birds and beasts the prey,
Th' inevitable end must be the same.

Their gases, azote, carbon, will combine
With other substances, with flowers and grass,
With fire and water, fish and fowl and kine,
And countless generations as they pass.

The dead become the food of living men ;
Our blood from them in part derives its hue ;
We bite their dust, inhale their oxygen,
And are their debtors in each nerve and thew.

And when the world has reached its fiery end,
The relics of each one of Adam's race
Will have belonged to numbers that transcend
All calculation. Therefore let us face

The problem frankly, and avow belief
In resurrection at the hour of death,
And at th' appearing of our Shepherd Chief,
The rise and change of all who then have breath.

XXVIII. *LIFE A CONTINUAL RESURRECTION.*

FOR even in this life our tissues change,
And we are always rising from decay,
And every moment makes a fluxion strange,
And we are not as we were yesterday.

Identity is in the ruling mind,
Not in the shifting particles which pass
Into the bosom of the viewless wind :
And in a literal sense all flesh is grass.

Identity is in the sovereign mind,
And in the perisprite that hems it round,
When coils material within coils unwind,
Dissolve their ties and rot beneath the ground.

Within the compass of a garden walk
A hundred resurrections you may find—
A hundred seeds that shoot into a stalk,
And leave the husky perisperm behind.

XXIX. *'THE PILLAR AND GROUND OF THE TRUTH.'*

Do we, then, launch upon a puny stage
A new and monstrous spectre of the brain,
In hopes that many in a restless age
Will bid it welcome in the Church's train ?

Nay, rather to the Bridegroom and the Bride
Infallible we will continue leal :
Without them we have no trustworthy guide,
Without them can no pure emotion feel.

They are to us truth's everlasting home ;
Around us everywhere their beacons stand ;
Though science-led or fancy-lured we roam,
We dare not pass beyond their Holy Land.

Within their limits we have questions raised,
Not in rebellion 'gainst their sovereign sway,
But that thereby they rather may be praised,
And from the tomb a stone be rolled away.

The creed that from the Church of Christ we learn—
That at His coming all shall rise again—
We would not lead one wavering mind to spurn,
But hold 'as held the Apostolic men.

Yet underneath that creed another lies :
And they who read the Scripture scroll aright
Discover in it divers mysteries
Which dazzle first and then improve the sight.

XXX. 'THE HOUR COMETH AND NOW IS.'

CHRIST *is* the resurrection and the life :
The hour is coming and *now is*, when they
Who slumber sweetly after moral strife
Shall hear His voice, ' Arise and come away,

My love, my dove, my sister and my spouse,
Soul of my soul with perisprite surrounding ;
Winter is past and on the mountain brows
Ethereal spring in rapture is abounding.

'Songs of the turtle-doves that build their nests
In clefts and eaves of my celestial mansion
Float o'er the flowers that ope their fragrant breasts
And image forth thy being's wide expansion.

'The luscious fig-tree of the orchards there
With green and juicy fruits for thee are swelling,
And clusters of the tendrilled vine prepare
A fruitful bower around thy peaceful dwelling.

'The hills of frankincense, the mounts of myrrh,
The beds of spice in softest light are glowing ;
The north wind and the south the garden stir,
And living waters through the meads are flowing.

'There all things seen are types of things more deep,
And meet to satisfy thine inmost yearning,
There all the reapers sow, all sowers reap,
All learn who teach, and all who teach are learning.

'The world where thou wast taught to love My name,
Still dear to thee, is out of memory sliding ;
But here, with brethren who before thee came,
Thy joys will be progressive and abiding.

'Awake, arise into thy perfect rest ;
The spirit-body has no need of slumber ;
Duties of high import await the blest,
And offices of mercy without number.

'Awake, arise ; the angel choirs anew
Attune their harps to welcome thine appearing ;
And saints, who in thy natural body knew
And loved thee, to thy perisprite are nearing.

'The promised land is spread before thee there
In distance beyond distance ever growing,
And God alone can give thee power to bear
The bliss intense in ether tracts o'erflowing.'

XXXI. *THE SOUL HOVERING ROUND THE CORPSE.*

THERE are who think the spirit floats awhile
Around the body cherished in decay,
As if to catch its last complacent smile
And watch it fondly on its funeral way.

E'en as a mother, wife, or sister stands
And scatters flowers on a fresh-opened grave,
Or clasps in sacred grief her suppliant hands,
And weeps o'er what she has no power to save.

We cannot tell how long the chain may last
That ties the spirit to the crumbling mould :
Affinity so delicate is past
Our scrutiny. For ages it may hold ;

And long as molecules cohere they may
Be spirit-watched, through some attraction's might,
And only after slow and last decay
Be separated from the spirit quite.

For natural bodies certainly have slept—
As they must own who hold the Scriptures true—
Back to the light, have eaten, drank, and slept,
And lived not one life only here, but two.

XXXII. RESURRECTION OF SOME NATURAL BODIES.

FOUR days had Lazarus, the beloved, lain
In the cold rock when Jesu's voice awoke
The sleeping body, and it breathed again,
And from the winding-bands and napkin broke.

Elias prayèd for the widow's son,
And stretched himself three times upon the dead :—
Elias' faith the glorious prize has won,
And on a Gentile mother grace is shed.

Eliseus' staff had failed to bring to life
The child the Sunamitess mother lost,
But from his flesh with magnetism rife
A quickening virtue thawed the mortal frost.

Tabitha thus, and Eutychus were brought
Back from the dead by Paul, of God inspired
To prove by miracle the faith he taught,
And use therein the natural means required.

And many bodies of the saints that slept,
When Jesu had the gloomy frontier cleared,
Forth from the sepulchre and cerements stept,
And in the Holy City re-appeared.

XXXIII. *A TENTATIVE TASK.*

So was it with the saints not yet returned
To dust and vapour. They had not formed parts
Of other bodies long entombed and urned ;
They had not throbbed in others' brains and hearts.

They were not then as they will be who give
Their ashes to the earth, the air, the sea,
Who form the gases by which others live,
Wave in the plume and flourish in the tree.

If such as these can ever be reclaimed
And individualised, our reason must
Of all its wise conclusions be ashamed,
And bow its haughty head and bite the dust.

We dare not set a limit to Thy might,
Heaven-Father, nor define what Thou canst do.
What Thou hast really said—that must be right :
What Thou didst really mean—that must be true.

We do not dogmatise, do not pretend
To know the things that are from man concealed ;
Our task is tentative ; we do but send
Exploring bands of thought into the field,

And musing on the promise Thou hast given,
To send Thy Son again to claim His throne—
To take this tract outlying into heaven,
And make the undivided earth His own,

We think the trumpet notes of His advance
Will in the regions of the dead be heard,
The sepulchre will feel His lightning glance,
The many sleeping bodies will be stirred,

And tenants of the tomb—though few they be
When set against the races solved in air—
Attracted by some secret sympathy
With spirits from on high returning there,

May in some mode mysterious fulfil
The things in Holy Writ predicted, and,
Made subject each to a transforming will,
Restored before the great Restorer stand.

XXXIV. *A CENSOR'S VOICE.*

‘YOU are a layman—what have you to do
With points of dogma? You would scatter doubts
O’er what our people always held as true :
You shift, and none can tell your whereabouts.

‘You compromise ; you stutter in your talk,
As one who is not of himself assured :
You smell of schism—heresy—you stalk
With an assurance not to be endured.

‘With every form of error you coquet ;
(You are not rich, nor have you made a name ;)
We offer tests at which you seem to fret,
While still you boast your creed and ours the same.

‘You liberalise and rationalise and turn
The Scriptures with a Zwingli-Bucer hand,
(I think you are of those who ought to burn,)
And what you mean *I* cannot understand.

‘Tis a farrago of such paltry fluff
A breath of criticism might disperse,
Indeed, I may as well say plainly, stuff
That is not even worthy of my curse.’

XXXV. *REPLY.*

‘GOOD censor ; every creature has its use :
I take your bluff rebuke as kindly meant ;
Albeit when you load me with abuse
I think your pious zeal somewhat misspent.

‘I am as faithful to the Church as you,
Though perhaps upon a slightly different plane.
The loadstone judges every needle true
That points to it across the rolling main.

‘As in the Scriptures so in Council, creed,
And formula prescribed by Christ’s dear wife,
They must sometimes discriminate who read ;
The letter kills, the spirit giveth life.

‘Perhaps the theory I here propose,
If theory indeed it be, may keep
The feet of some within the safe enclose,
Who now are all-but plunging down the steep.’

XXXVI. *THE SOUL-BODY PRESERVES OUR IDENTITY.*

WE have two lives before us—two at least—
It may be many more : death is but change.
By lives successive bliss may be increased ;
And higher wisdom comes with wider range.

But what preserves identity when we
Drop in the turf the outer husk and shell,
When in another home the spirit, free
From earth's entanglement, begins to dwell ?

What is it but the Spirit-body deep
Within us forming from the hour of birth—
Our second self, which waking or asleep
Received impressions from its kindred earth,—

Impressions in the memory retained
-And borne undamaged through the floods of death,
Impressions in the soul so deeply grained
That they will regulate our future breath,—

Will make the world unseen to us a heaven,
A place of penal, purifying flame,
Or torture us with sins still unforgiven
And wreak the nemesis of wrath and shame ?

XXXVII. *VARIETY OF CONDITIONS IN THE NEXT WORLD.*

YET in that triplex world without a bound

It may be every shade of joy and grief,
Of ignorance and knowledge will be found,
Of good and ill, of faith and misbelief.

The Spirit-body, like this gross machine,

May be the instrument of weal or woe,
May sweep endiadem'd across the scene
Or sink despairing in the gulfs below.

We all are building daily that abode

In which the deathless principle shall dwell,
Lightening or adding to our future load—
The architects of our own heaven or hell.

This makes existence serious—makes it grave

Beyond compute. Whatever passions burn
Within us wildly, and the heart deprave,
Produce a dread reaction in return

From that interior body which transmits

The ruling thought through all the subject frame,
And often carries hence from criminal fits
A mark indelible by tears or flame.

XXXVIII. *PROTEAN SPIRIT-BODIES.*

THE Spirit-bodies which are shapes of light
Diffuse themselves, like stars, on all around,
Irradiate at will reluctant night,
And pierce through fire and water, air and ground,

And, rooted in their central being fast,
In several spots may at one time appear,
And thought and presence in a moment cast
Upon a point in some far distant sphere,

Dispensing with the laws that regulate
What we call matter, though in fact they are,
Compared with higher spirits, dense in weight
And substance as a rock or iron bar.

The evil spirits which the Lord cast out
Had frames that could with human frames combine,
Demoniac slaves in torment drag about,
And, entering, madden even herds of swine.

XXXIX. *CHANGE OF ENVELOPE.*

WHO can, indeed, run up and down the scale
Of matter? Who can see or feel beyond
His tiny circle? Sense and language fail
When any natures break their natural bond.

Hence spirits don some half-material robe
Wrought from the universal fluid round,
Each swiftly-racing sun-attracted globe
In which they would for some brief while be found,—
Be and appear by turns, appear and be,
And yet without deceit rest always true—
True to some high ideal for which we
Yearn vaguely, hoping for experience, too,
When we at last shall slough this spotted skin
And spread the wings that long enfolded lay
Rise, moth-like, into ether, and begin
To run the same curriculum as they,
And study marvels which, however, rise
No whit above the wonders at our feet—
The simplest elements we can agnise,
The compounds that in fixed proportions meet.

XL. 'THE BODY OF THIS DEATH.'

BUT what concerns far more the life within
Is this, to know that when we pass away
An instrument awaits us fine and thin,
Which will the motions of the mind obey,
True as the harp-strings to a master-hand,
Without resistance, sluggishness, or jar,
As any fainting zephyr soft and bland,
Yet keen and trenchant as a scimitar.

O prospect blessed to the writhing nerves
And tissues that seem only made for pain—
The body that from healthful purpose swerves
And sums up action in a tortured brain.

O prospect blessed for the passion-slave
Who would, but cannot, from the body flee,
Invokes temptation which he should not brave,
Succumbs and cries, 'Ah, who shall set me free?'

Come, pure and pliant body of the blest,
Make moral harmony on dulcet strings;
Be to my soul a couch of perfect rest;
Be to my soul a pair of soaring wings!

XLI. THE CAPTIOUS QUESTION OF THE SADDUCEES.

'WHOSE wife shall she be then when all arise—
She who was unto seven brethren wed?'

A captious question; yet the Lord replies
In words that light the charnels of the dead.

'You think you know, but do not really know
The Scriptures and the glorious power of God:
The plant to be is not the plant you sow;
The grain itself will perish in the sod.

'But from the rotting seed a deathless germ
Will rise and rear its spiritual head,
As from the caterpillar and the worm
A wingèd thing of coloured light is bred.

'Your dreams are of the earth, you hope to reign
O'er subject heathen, to be kings and lords ;
Some lost inheritance of land to gain
And banquet around dainty-laden boards.

'But in the resurrection pipe and flute
Escort no more to her beloved the bride ;
No children there of wedlock are the fruit ;
No love intense to passion is allied.

'For bodies like the angels' will require
Conditions more ethereal and more blest,
For which your grovelling natures must aspire
If ever they would rest a perfect rest.

'And, touching resurrection, here again
You err and think it has no place as yet.
Your fathers are not dead, but living men ;
That God is Jacob's God you quite forget.

'He has them with Him nearer to His throne :
And they are even now incorporate souls :
Their bodies lighter, fairer than your own,
Through heavenly ether range in radiant stoles.

'The dead *are* raised, and even while I speak
I see the souls of many burst their shell,
Into a second life superior break,
And there in spirit-flesh with Abram dwell.

'And these are equal to the angels, nay,
Are higher than the angels ; children, these,
Of God and of the resurrection. Say,
Can dead men to my Father bow their knees ?

‘And did not Moses hear my Father’s voice
When in the burning bush His glory flamed,—
“I *am* their God; e’en now they *are* My choice;
Therefore am I the God of Jacob named.

“I wait not till the sun shall wane to give
The faithful the reward of faithful strife;
They live to me and I to them will live
For ever, and my realm entire is life.”’

The Sadducees amazed Thy doctrine heard,
Lord Christ; yet few its hidden sense could find;
And thine evangelists still preach that word,
Yet still the multitude is crass and blind.

XLII. *TRANSFORMED INTO AN ANGEL OF LIGHT.*

THOUGH guilt and hideousness are near akin
And passions violent deform the face,
There are exceptions to this rule, and sin
Is sometimes veiled in loveliness and grace.

The dove-soft eye, the chiselled profile, hair
Of raven hue in glossy tresses shed
O’er neck and bust as Parian marble fair,
The lightsome laughter, and the queenly tread,

Have often mantled cruelty and lust
Insatiate; and this leads us on to think
That many spirits base, impure, unjust,
Of no Gehenna brimstone smoke may stink,

But rather float, all beauty and perfume,
And quaff the nectar of such flowers as grow
In ether, while at heart they feel their doom
Is black, intense, unmitigated woe.

The Spirit-body will be no relief
From pain, however brightly it may shine ;
The light of grace alone will banish grief,
Its absence burn like fire of wrath divine.

XLIII. *MEN ARE SPIRITS.*

DESPITE the density of mortal frames—
Despite the grovelling of the meaner kind—
I look on men as spirits—living flames
Alight with varied energy of mind.

And if the spirits of another sphere
Regard us sometimes through the mutual veil,
What can they contemplate in beings here
But spirits panoplied in spirit-mail ?

The will, the growing mind, the undying soul,
Are visible to them at every pore,
And every action of the breathing whole
Looks to them spiritual more and more.

So let the brother of his sister think ;
So let the loved one of her lover dream.
We all are spirits wandering on the brink
Of spiritdom advanced. Thus we shall seem

More like to what we really are, shall grow
In power magnetic over human hearts,
Rise into higher spheres of thought, and know
Far better how to play our future parts.

XLIV. *DREAMS.*

MORE than ourselves we are sometimes in dreams.
The body slumbers but the soul awakes,
And the electric body, as it seems,
The place awhile of the more sensuous takes.

And in this state the spirit is more free
To commune with such agents as may bring
Some message bearing on our destiny
Straight from the throne of our all-seeing King.

A dream once turned the current of my years
And spake in darkness with a voice aloud,
Steadied a mind that wavered in its fears,
And chased away an ever-blackening cloud.

Full often have the dead in dreams appeared ;
Full often has the Spirit-body bent
Above the sleeper, recognised, though feared,
As one upon a special errand sent.

God of the spirits of all kinds of flesh,
Waking or sleeping we are wholly Thine,—
Oh, manifest Thy will in dreams afresh
If dreams will keep us on the sacred line !

XLV. *LUZ.*

THE Rabbis tell us of a tiny bone
Which in the spinal column will defy
Decay, and which of all our dust alone
Will last while intervital years sweep by,
And then fermented by the dew of heaven,
Expand into a body meet to be
The rest and dwelling-place of souls forgiven
And in their new embodiment set free.
They called it Luz, and let that be its name.
A kind of Luz exists in every form
Once of immortal souls the mortal frame
With gushing life-streams of the heart's blood warm.
It will develop. Judas knew it well—
The valiant Maccabeus—when he sent
That costly offering for the men who fell
In battle and their patriot life-blood spent,
And He, convinced the tomb had not the power
To hold its captives—that the seed would win
Its way to light as herb bedewed or flower—
Sought sacrifice to wash away their sin.
For 'well and honestly' had Judas thought
Concerning resurrection, and he knew
How vain and empty all he had been taught
Unless the valiant dead were risen too—

Unless they stood before their Father clothed
And individualised, to reap reward,
Or expiate sin they had not duly loathed,
And wipe the stains of conquest from their sword.

I doubt not like a chime rang in his ear,
‘Awake and sing, O ye who dwell in dust :
Your dew is as the dew of herbs. The seer
Has seen you rising, and arise you must.’

He offered prayers that were to take effect
At once, not waiting for the world’s last day,
To win some present grace for Jews elect
And speed them shriven on their ascending way.

XLVI. *THE SPIRITUAL SYSTEM.*

THERE are, I know, who when they read my page
(If any read) will say, ‘This feeble brain
And morbid, quite unworthy of the age,
Turns to his nursery Bible tales again,

‘And bows the knee to a tiara’d priest —
A senile despot ;—toss his book aside !
It is as vain and valueless as yeast
Upon the crest of the advancing tide.

‘He uses freedom to become a slave ;
His will—his choice—is to be blindly led ;
He prates of science ;—as if science gave
Her countenance to aught his Church has said !’



I answer—herein meeting scorn with scorn—

I do not write for those who ape the brute,
Who think for this life only they were born
And ne'er aspire to any nobler fruit.

The Church—the Scriptures—these I take as guide

In matters that concern the deathless soul :
You to another system are allied,
A system whereof matter is the whole.

Yet matter—matter's self—to which you cling,
And which I reverence even more than you,
Will prove you are a wretched grovelling thing—
Will prove the spiritual system true.

XLVII. *ANGELIC BODIES ARE REAL.*

NOT only spirits, angels too, possess
An organism suited to their sphere,
With faculty of wearing any dress
In which it may behove them to appear.

In every age they have been seen by men :
Between them and the court of heaven they fly :
If what we read of them is fiction, then
God, revelation, 'truth' is all a lie,

And we are nothing more than nature's sport ;
And confluent atoms have the power of thought ;
And speculation is of no import ;
And all things tend to anything or nought.

But if the angels really are ; if they
Have from all time been ministers unseen,
Bursting, however, sometimes into day,
And carrying on an intercourse between

Spheres widely differing in kind and end,—
And if the records of their acts are true,—
They are to deeds most varied apt, and lend
Themselves to shapes mysterious to view,

Yet real as the lights that in the North
In winter span the sky with arches bright,
And dart their fiery sheaves and columns forth
With colours tremulous that charm the sight.

For all we see is real. Nothing meets
The retina or spirit's inward eye
But has a substance, though it perhaps defeats
The keen observer's keenest scrutiny.

XLVIII. *THE ACTS OF ANGELS ARE ACCORDING TO
LAW.*

WHAT is there that the angels have not done ?
What is there that the angels have not seemed ?
For joy they shouted when the world begun,
And succoured Him by whom it was redeemed.

But mark, in all the works they have achieved,
In all the prodigies their hands have wrought,
They were organic, and must be believed
To be embodiments of active thought.

For angels equally with spirits tread
The hills of cloud or fluctuate in air
In bodies on ambrosial ether fed
And, in proportion to their virtues, fair.

And all the miracles they ever wrought,
And all the miracles men ever saw,
Though alien utterly to human thought
Were done according to inviolate law—

The rigid rules of spiritual law
Which often supernatural we call ;
As if in nature there were any flaw
Or fissure ! Perfect order reigns through all,

And laws are subject unto laws without
Collision. Could we take a wider range
And see as gods, we should not have a doubt
The sequences of nature never change.

XLIX. MATERIAL ATTRIBUTES OF ANGELS.

WHENE'ER we turn the prophet's sacred page
And cull with reverent hand its Eden fruits,
We find in every clime, condition, age,
The angels have material attributes.

They see, they touch, they brandish flaming swords,
They plant their feet among the myrtle trees,
Smite down the captains of Assyrian hordes,
And speak with tongues and talk with men at ease.

Now in the altar-flame they heavenward soar;
Now rescue saints from lions or from fire;
Now pause beside the peaceful threshing-floor;
Now chant Messiah's birth in jubilant choir.

Where'er the Spirit of the Lord descends
The angel squadrons hover round the way,
Ambassadors for grand and gracious ends
Duly accredited to sons of clay.

And thus they form a part of one vast scheme
Redemptive, in which God the Son conveys
His gifts to man by things that are—not seem—
Allied to human sense and human ways.

L. *ANGELS ENTERTAINED UNAWARES.*

SOME 'entertainèd angels unawares,'
So like—so very like—they were to men.
Abram his tent and viands with them shares,
And they elude Lot and Manoah's ken.

For subtle power is to this nature given
Of moulding their material shapes at will,
Appearing habitants of earth or heaven,
But resting pure and abstract angels still.

LI. *THE UNIVERSAL FLUID.*

AND whence have these their finer substance drawn?
And by what genesis did they obtain
A garment glittering like the dewy lawn
When morning bursts her golden gates again?

Whence came these swords of spiritual fire
Which flame innocuous or destroy at will ?
Is there a universal fluid higher
And rarer than the finest airs that fill

The regions which our senses can explore ?
And has the Lord of life from out the deep
Of this exhaustless mine delved all the ore
Of elemental matter ? Never sleep

Has closed the eyes of the Almighty mind ;
Fatigue and rest have ne'er relaxed His hand ;
The sunshine of His face has ne'er declined,
Nor His tide loitered upon any strand.

The boundless realms of space, with sun and moon
And stars which swiftest angels cannot reach,
By him are wrought off like some vast cocoon
Perennially, His power and love to preach.

And of one substance He has woven all,
And still is weaving and will ever weave
Systems on systems that arise and fall
In periods longer than thought can conceive,—

Of that one fluid substance ; rather say
Of none—no substance—nothing but the force
Of His own will adorable, whose sway
Extends from spirit-fount through matter's course,

And breathes in knotted vortex rings the breath
Of worlds, elaborating out of nought
Empires and states of beauteous living death
And dying life most exquisitely wrought,—

And out of matter—matter such as here
We picture to ourselves—evolving mind ;
Imaginations lofty ; reasonings clear ;
And hopes for scaling highest grades designed ;
Phenomena alike of men and things,
Of planets, milky ways, and vapour stars,
Of worlds and satellites and moons and rings,
And souls and bodies leaping mortal bars ;
And realms of angels and abodes of saints ;
Intelligences high, capacious, keen ;
And bliss beyond what liveliest fancy paints,
And bliss beyond all bliss that yet has been ;
And genius with its flower-dust of thought,
The exquisite aroma of its line,
Its intuition, faculties untaught,
Its words inspired, its instincts half divine ;
And love that flings a rainbow over tears—
Love that is love the more when sorrow-fed,
Without which none could bear the weight of years,
And all the bound and spring of life were dead ;
And valour—moral courage—strength to brave
Discouragement, rebuke, neglect, and scorn,
To fight convinced a higher Hand will save,
To suffer certain of a brighter morn ;
And natural and spiritual forms ;
And others more than we shall ever know
That bask in light or tame infuriate storms ;
And every necessary grade of woe ;

Yes, out of matter—ether—what you will—
Something or nothing—with a plastic hand
Elaborating all the things that fill
The universe or ever can be planned,—

Thus working forth from spirit, and again
Through matter back unto the spirit-spring
In process everlasting, and which men
See dimly like a half-conjectured thing.

LI. *ANGELS CREATE THEIR OWN BODIES.*

AND God, who loves to delegate His might,
To angels in a sense creative lends
This faculty of gathering on the right
And left the particles which each extends,

Contracts and moulds by effort of the will
Into the special shape that suits an aim,
Some purpose of his being to fulfil
In altered guise though in himself the same.

LII. *MAN MADE OF AIR.*

AND what is man but organised air?
For mainly on the atmosphere we live,
Feeding without an effort or a care
The frames to which but little else we give.

For even when we slake our thirst and eat
Our daily bread, the elements of air—
They chiefly form the food we find so sweet,
They chiefly mix the draughts that taste so rare.

The spirit gently breathing round the earth
With light and heat upon its balmy wings
Is that unseen refection whence, from birth
To death, all that we have and are outsprings.

LIII. *SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA FREQUENT AND
INFREQUENT.*

I DOUBT it would not render angels blest
To be concerned in all our mean affairs,
Nor would the souls of men find peace and rest
In being over-conversant with theirs.

So pressing the concerns of daily life,
So hardly taxed our energies to gain
The bread which perishes, that studies rife
With spirit-rapture would engender pain,

And half unfit us for our earthly sphere ;
And therefore angel visits rarely break
On human vision, rarely spirits cheer
The lonely walks that sad survivors take.

'Tis mercy all, but special mercy this,
That sometimes strangely sweet and loving eyes
Gaze on us with a glance of earnest bliss
And witness to the truth of paradise.

And many from the cradle have beheld
Such visitors, and seen them circle brows
Of others like a halo, and have spelled
The lessons writ in answer to their vows :

And many felt their consolations sweet,
So sweet that when their silent steps no more
Trod the calm air-waves of a blest retreat
The heart too full of grief in tears ran o'er.

And many have been raised in air and made
To dominate your gravitation laws,
And pestilent devils torturing and afraid
Have been cast out,—and prayer alone the cause.

And many with new tongues have spoken clear,
And many drained a poison-cup unharmed,
And read the thoughts of others far and near,
And charmed for good and ill, and disencharmed.

And they who call these things inventions new
Forget the faithful apostolic past,
Forget Christ's promise that, the ages through,
Visions and dreams and miracles should last.

LIV. 'TRY THE SPIRITS.'

If spirits are abroad and talk with men,
How shall we know if they be good and true ;
If evil, track them to their noisome den,
If good, the path of their desire pursue ?

The test of spirits, like the test of those
Who unto spiritual gifts lay claim,
Is near at hand and urgent to propose—
The reverence they do to Jesu's name.

If from His Majesty they never shrink,
Accept His doctrine, practical, entire,
Their wings, be sure, have dipped in Gihon's brink,
Their tongues, be sure, are cloven, 'as of fire.'

On them the Heavenly Dove complacent sits ;
We need not fear their voice if they comply
With our demands and feed us with some bits
Of wisdom learnt in schools of thought on high.

But if they blink at Jesu's Church and name,
And writhe and mock beneath that sacred spell,
I brand their unseen brows with blasting shame
And count them for the ministers of hell.

LV. *THE LAW OF SYMPATHETIC ATTRACTION.*

AND what will group together heavenly souls ?
And what will group together heavenly frames ?
Is there no law imperious that controls
The social concourse of those spirit-flames ?

There is a law as potent as the sun
Exerts—as potent as the planets feel ;
Attraction—sympathy—the terms are one—
Draws heart to heart as loadstone draws the steel.

The living atoms rush towards the sphere
Congenial, and revolve around the blaze
Of spirit-centres during life-time dear,
Or perhaps revealed to them in after days.

Love—unity of purpose—mutual sense
Of truth and beauty—these are links that bring
Together souls incorporate speeding hence
To orb each in his own appointed ring,

And from that charmed circle start and fly,
Held by a lengthening never-broken cord,
To waft commissions on from sky to sky,
And wider spread true knowledge of the Lord.

LVI. *RECOGNITION HEREAFTER OF CONGENIAL
SPIRITS.*

IF we should hope for less than Tully hoped—
If we aspired not one day to behold
The bravest warriors who with sin have coped
In glint of snowy vest and crowns of gold,

We were unworthy of the Christian name—
Unworthy of the Church whose dew is still
Upon our foreheads, and whose trumps proclaim
E'en now the gathering upon Zion's hill.

There let us trust to bow the knee before
The spirits who for us had strongest charms,
Over their glorious lineaments to pore,
To kiss their feet and fold them in our arms.

For they and we shall, polarised alike,
Attract instinctively and eke repel :
Poets into the poet ranks will strike,
Disciples easily their master tell.

The toilsome sons of science will embrace
The pioneer foresighted, eager, sage,
In features glorified past features trace
Through all the counter lines of youth and age.

Oh, joy to wander through the porch more grand
Than ancient Stoa, and through groves more blest
Than Academia, and on every hand
Discover where our heroes walk or rest !

‘ What gods are these, who struggled once in tears
Through that dim valley of our earthly star,
And now are younger with increase of years,
And grow from what they were to what they are ? ’

If Dante, Petrarch, Galileo, had
Such hold upon us here, what will they prove
When, made supremely wise, supremely glad,
Their very intellect is merged in love ?

All errors rectified, all stains effaced,
The mighty dead will group around us, known
And individualised, in bodies braced
By food ethereal even as our own.

LVII. *RECOGNITION HEREAFTER OF THOSE WE LOVE.*

BUT if we recognise the spirits raised
By genius high above their fellow men,
Much more shall we recall—nor feel amazed—
The faces that we loved most dearly then.

The faces—for indeed the spirit-form
Is like, so like, the body whence it rose,
It seems at times with the same life-blood warm—
With the same blush of health and beauty glows.

Nor ever portrait was by limner made
So life-like as the Spirit-body seems
To its original in light and shade,
In tone and colour, gesture, glances, gleams.

Materialising power it has within,
As Christ the Lord when risen from the dead,—
Power o'er itself to thicken and to thin,
Likeness, unlikeness, be, or be not, read.

But on the loving the beloved will shine
Complacently, recalling youthful hours
When nascent love made earth seem half divine
And Eden's light invested fading bowers.

Is there a hand thine own has fondly pressed
More dear than any other, quick or dead,
Is there a bosom where alone found rest
The fevered throbbing of thy aching head?

Is there an eye whose depth of tearful light
Was to thy soul a well of joy unique ?
And are there lips, now closed by death and night,
That sipped the honey of thy blossom cheek

In pure affection ? Thou shalt grasp that hand
And on that faithful bosom shalt recline ;
Those eyes will single thee from any band
And those fond lips again shall close with thine.

For in the Spirit-body is contained
A strict resemblance to its former shell ;
Old beauty in new beauty is ingrained
And old emotions in new pulses swell.

LVIII. *FRIBBLE OBJECTS.*

AND here perhaps some fribble will object,
'You preacher of a Moslem paradise,
No doubt you soon will join the Islam sect
And find your level in its sensual lies.'

I answer, 'Fribble, were I to explain
How high Mount Zion above Mecca towers,
How every corner of the heavenly plain
Is steeped in gracious dew of Hermon showers,

'I should but waste my words, for much I fear
You are of those whom light, malefic gnomes
Will seize on when you reach your proper sphere
And whirl like stubble round their quarried domes.'

LIX. *OUR CHILDREN RECOGNISED HEREAFTER.*

OH, mother, weeping for your blue-eyed boy
In spite of all the minister has said,
For in your darling was your only joy,
His sisters wedded and his father dead.

And scanty comfort find you in the thought
That in his God the child's dear spirit rests ;
His image ever to your mind is brought,
His face so full of wiles, his laugh, his jests.

Well, mother, let your widowed heart revive :
Your arms of love may fondle him anew ;
His very flaxen locks shall wave, alive
With glint as glossy and with charm as true ;

His Spirit-body shall repeat the play,
The prayer, the smiles, with mutual caress,
That made the solace of your wintry day,
And you again your darling shall possess—

Possess more beautiful than here below—
Possess and never, never lose again—
Redeemed and washed as white as virgin snow :
Oh, widowed mother, what a meeting then !

Though here we walk by faith and not by sight,
Yet even here, if such His gracious will,
He could—yea, answering your prayers, He might
Show you your darling living, breathing, still—

Show you his slender hands upon the chord
Of some angelic harp, and bid you hear
His dulcet accents hymn the exalted Lord
Who died for him and for his mother dear.

LX. *THE DIVINA COMMEDIA.*

I SPOKE of Dante, for indeed he best
Of all the poet-seers the world unseen
Has painted ; e'en as Shakspeare of the rest
Most masterful in actual life has been.

By marvellous intuition Dante caught
The essential features both of heaven and hell ;
The outward forms embodying inward thought ;
The modes of anguish and of bliss as well ;

The vast variety of spirit-states—
More vast than we on earth can ever guess ;
The penal steps that lead to twelve pearl gates—
In which the body is concerned no less

Than the undying spirit ; and the laws
Of moral evolution. Well indeed
That Comedy is called Divine, because
It sows of truth occult such plenteous seed.

But spiritual body is the base
Of Dante's every picture of the dead :¹
Abstract from each of them time, form, and space,
And all his bloom of poetry is shed.

¹ See especially *Il Purgatorio*, xxv. 88-108, on the aerial body.

I.XI. CHRIST'S MIRACLES ACCORDING TO LAW.

O THOU one Mediator 'twixt God and man,
Who to redeem and teach the world wast sent,
If we should call Thee a great Medium, can
We be with justice deemed irreverent ?

For Thou didst act according unto law
When seemingly Thou didst the law transcend,
And by Thy will supreme together draw
Such airy particles as served Thy end

To multiply the fish and loaves of bread ;
Materialise and dematerialise at will ;
Walk on the rolling waves or raise the dead ;
The demons chase ; the howling tempest still ;

Restore the blind to sight ; make water wine ;
Hide healing virtue in Thy garment's hem ;
On Tabor gloriously transfigured shine ;
And wither from the root the fig-tree-stem.

We say not vaguely Thou wert Lord of all,
And therefore all things were beneath Thy sway,
Before a grander Majesty we fall,
For, working miracles, Thou didst law obey.

And we have seen Thee delegate Thy power
At times to these frail creatures of Thy hand,
And make them dominate matter for an hour
By force of will, that we may understand

How certain laws surpass all we can know
From science, and preside o'er wondrous acts
Called supernatural, for here below
They seldom have become recorded facts.

Our second Moses, Giver of the law,
In all Thy life obedient unto rule,
We pray Thee grant us reasonable awe,
And teach us lessons in a higher school,

That we may recognise Thy deeds divine
As breaches of no law which Thou hast made;
May see the saving Thaumaturgus shine
In darkness, nor be slavishly afraid,

But bow the knee before the Law of Laws,
The Mind supreme, through whom all forces play,
Who ne'er produced effect without a cause
Co-equal, never could impede or stay

The course of His own works, or counter-plan
Eternity's designs, or turn aside
From old procession, or impose on man
Phenomena to nature erst denied,

Or undo anything His Father wrought
From everlasting, or by fits and starts
Upset the balance of inquiring thought
By imitating the magician's arts.

No, Jesu, Master, Lord and God, Thy ways
Inscrutable were ever ordered, sweet,
Evolving, slow, as in Thine ancient days,—
No timing like the timing of Thy f

LXII. *CREATION DEMONSTRATED BY GOD
INCARNATE.*

THE mystery of creation Thou hast made
As clear as may be to our finite view ;
And torn away the folds of shade on shade
That wrapped it round so many ages through.

For who that marks Thy limitless control
O'er all the elements of matter needs
A clearer proof that Thou didst breathe the soul
And sow the fields of heaven with starry seeds ?

For He who made the lame to dance with glee,
And poured the daybeam on the sightless nerve—
He taught the planets in their course to flee
And lurid comets how to sweep and swerve.

What He, the Word, 'in the beginning' said—
'Let there be light!' He in His brief career,
On earth repeated momentarily and laid
The corner-stone of every science here.¹

LXIII. *FAITH REMOVING MOUNTAINS.*

MATTER was powerless beneath the hand
Of the Great Master Mind;—it melts like wax ;
The mountains shift their bases on the land
And slip into the restless ocean tracts.

¹ The Book of Genesis and the Gospel of St. John begin with the same expression : 'In the beginning,' *i.e.* from all eternity.

The lightning of His will makes iron flow
Like water, and He dissipates in air
The pregnant germs of malady and woe
In answer to the feeblest follower's prayer.

And greater works than these His children do
(For Christ is Father of the Chosen race)
If in His vital truth their faith be true
And all their being subject unto grace.

O mountain, lifting up thy head so proud !
O mountain ! any saint on bended knee
Might view thee torn from thy foundations, bowed,
Broken and crushed, and cast into the sea.

LXIV. *ST. PAUL'S PRAYER FOR THE BODY.*

'BLAMELESS until the coming of the Lord
Your body be preserved;' such was the prayer
Of blessed Paul, yet is that body stored
Only in changeful currents of the air.

The bodies of the Thessalonian saints
To whom he wrote that prayer long since were made
Parts of the ever-flying breeze which paints
The cheeks that in succession bloom and fade.

We argue, then, that in the Spirit Paul
Spake of the body that cannot decay—
The spirit-frame that never knows a pall,
But in the night of death begins its day.

Preserve it in us blameless, so that we
Be ready for Thy coming, whensoever
Thou comest, and Thy gracious will it be
In us to grant the great Apostle's prayer.

LXV. 'EARTH TO EARTH.'

THEN do we lose all reverence for the field
Wherein the bones of saints and martyrs lie?
And will their relics no more fragrance yield,
Because we know that they in turn must die,
Resolve into the aura that careers
O'er mountain tops and strews theholt with leaves,
Harrows the heart of mariners with fears,
Or whispering wafts perfume about our eaves?
No; dear and honoured be the sacred dust
Of what were living temples of the Lord,
And dear the tilth to which our hands entrust
The grim remains refusing to be stored.
This is the highest glory of the earth,
That from its quickened dust we all proceed,
And that when death becomes our second birth,
It holds the husk which held the vital seed.

LXVI. *SPIRIT-WRITING.*

AS some whom we have known could often draw
Flow'rets and tendrils of worlds out of sight,
Under conditions varying from law,
So did the Prophets and Apostles write.

For as in these without the will or mind,
The pencil, guided by an unseen hand,
Traced grapes and stems and leaves and buds
designed

With mystic meaning,—so we understand

The pen that Daniel, Luke, Isaias, held
To have been oft-times moved without their will,
By inspiration's breath divine impelled
Th' apocalyptic scroll of life to fill.

And thus the Sacred Text bears seldom trace
Of human imperfection ; God reveals
In it the glorious Gospel of His grace,
And in our hearts the spirit-writing seals.

LXVII. *BODILESS GHOSTS.*

THE immortality which some proclaim—
That of a naked spirit merely—seems
To me an expectation drear and tame—
Most hideous and improbable of dreams.

What comfort in the thought that our egress,
From bodies suited to external things
Varied and lovely, will but leave us less
Complexity of being, clip our wings,

Eliminate our faculties of sight,
Of hearing, touch, communion with our kind,
Block up the genial avenues of light,
And in self-consciousness' lone prison bind

The heavenly captives? Better far than this,
Methinks, about the pastures to be whirled,
Contribute to survivors' transient bliss
And help to form the beauty of the world.

Let those who will pine to be simply ghosts
And less than ghosts—for even these appear—
But I shall hope to join th' embodied hosts
Who see and who are seen in vision clear.

LXVIII. *RISING FROM THE GRAVE.*

THE body is the only real tomb ;
From it alone th' immortal frame will rise ;
The body also is a perfect womb,
For it produces children of the skies.

If on the couch of death you see it lie,
The hues of life fast fading from the cheek,
The blue and red merged in a leaden dye,
The whole expression peaceful, sweet, and meek,—

Say thou, ' It is my brother's—sister's—grave,
But out of it the Spirit-body springs
And flies to Him who is so strong to save :—
And as the may-fly opes its mottled wings

From sheaths along the feathery larva drawn
And casts its pellicle into the tide,
And skims the lake that bounds the velvet lawn
With green and brown and yellow livery pied,—

So rises now the spirit from the tomb ;
Inaugurates a never-dying day ;
Puts off the pellicle of pain and gloom ;
Puts on the resurrection's bright array.'

LXIX. *TAKING THE VEIL.*

I SAW her stand before the altar, fair
And clothed in rich apparel—saw her train
Sweep the encaustic tiles, and her long hair
Braided with flowers and jewels—saw with pain

And pleasure mingled ; loving friends I saw
Around her, heard the choral voices sing
An anthem jubilant yet rife with awe,
As if concerned with some mysterious thing.

I saw them take away her costly tire
And loose the circlets of her jewelled locks :
The shears divide them ; silent is the choir,
And on a bier she lies ; the pall that shocks

My memory as it shocked me then in fact
Is thrown about her, and the death's-heads stare ;
The convent bells toll for the last grim Act,
The requiem for the dead floats on the air.—

And she was dead—dead in a sense. But, lo,
She rises ; she is called by a new name ;
The sisters beckon her in robes of snow,
And in Maria's stead the virgin claim.

She looks her last adieu to earthly toys
And through the sombre grating passes in,
And music, angel-sweet, is pledging joys
Perennial in long victory over sin.

I saw the outline of her figure plain
And waving garment. 'Tis prefigured death,'
I said; 'her soul *and body* find a reign
Of higher thought and more harmonious breath.'

LXX. *BODY WITHIN BODY.*

How many forms within one human form!
A perfect series closely intertwined;—
The netted skin with its life-colour warm;
The nervine system, and the veins that wind
With arteries ever in the shape of man;
The muscles and the bones conformed likewise;
The skeleton—the basis of the plan—
Composed of substance in the self-same guise

Earthly and animal—by chemist solved
If need be; and above and over all
The spiritual body, which evolved
From mind and matter rightly so we call—

The spiritual body, which records
In its immortal tissues thoughts and deeds,
Proves that we are or we are not the Lord's,
And of our future contains all the seeds,

This is the only body that will rise,
A better likeness of the one it leaves ;
For flesh and blood inherit not the skies,
Nor incorruption the corrupt receives.

So 'fearfully and wonderfully made'
Is man that he who 'neath the surface dips
There finds the base of Christian doctrine laid,
And man himself is God's apocalypse.

LXXI. *'BE ZEALOUS FOR THE BETTER GIFTS.'*

FORBIDDEN to hold commerce with the dead ;
Forbidden to aspire to spirit-gifts !
Why, this is the reverse of what is said
In Scripture ; and indeed what Zion lifts
Above Mount Sinai is the clearer light
Of immortality upon its crown,
The unity of regions out of sight
With churches on which grace is raining down
In rich profusion. Gifts of grace abound
If we but seek them,—faith to move the hills—
To heal the sick—o'er laggard space to bound—
To turn the current of events like rills—
To waken flow'rets from the desert sand—
To summon spirits from the luminous deep—
To speak with tongues—to solve and understand
All mysteries—to sleep a charmed sleep—

To hide the stigmata—to live on air—
Be nourished by the Eucharist alone—
To wrestle with the might of Jacob's prayer—
To levitate inert and ponderous stone—

To prophesy—dream dreams and pour the tide
Of untaught music—paint with skill inspired—
To walk the world, with angels at our side,
And with the Sacred Heart's own flame be fired—


Talk with the dead—consult them, pray, invoke
Their presence and their blessing—with them grow
Familiar as if with dear friends we spoke,
And more and more about their status know,—

These are some only of the gifts divine
Which to the Church of God by right belong ;
The legacy of Christ has made them thine ;
They who contest it do thee shameful wrong.

See that thou prize them, lest they too run wild ;
For only within limits are they good ;
They may be counterfeits, abused, defiled,
If not beneath the shadow of the Rood.

LXII. *'KNOWLEDGE SHALL BE MANIFOLD.'*

THE glories of the earth and sky are made
More clear by science every day and hour,
And therefore now may be the more displayed
The greater marvels of the Spirit's power,



Let matter learn to own its sovereign lord,
Let spirit find in matter deeper deeps
Of beauty till their strength together poured
O'er every barrier of resistance sweeps
And floods the Church with knowledge and with
 grace,
And rolls o'er sceptic ruins, saps the towers
Of Babel menace, and reflects the face
Of heaven in this mirror-world of ours.

LXIII. *THE DEAD INVOKED.*

HERE let me pause awhile, perhaps ne'er again
To strike the chord. Ye spirits of the dead,
If I have sought your blessing on the strain—
If I have felt your blessing round me shed—

If this midsummer task was day by day
Laid at your feet, confided to your wings—
Take it entire and foster it, I pray,
That many a voice may echo what it sings.

As yet our languid hearts have done you wrong
And doubted your complete existence there
In God's immediate presence, 'mid the throng
Of angel-men in form surpassing fair.

As yet your person has for us been shorn
Of its proportions comely, grand, and meet,
To decorate the children of the morn
Who in aurora's light aurora greet.

And represent, each in his finite sphere,
The Saviour-God who took the form of man—
Who glorified the frame He died in here,
And rendered yours as like it as He can

Whose power is limitless. For this we know,
That seeing Him we shall be like Him seen,
And sure we are that you are fashioned so
As to be like what Christ Himself has been

Since from the earth His rapt disciples saw
Him mount to heaven with promise to return,
Reduce the natural to spirit law,
And all for which regenerate instincts yearn

Fulfil, with you for coadjutors, you
Descending from your blood-bought thrones to
grace
His triumph and to swell the pageant due
To the complete redemption of our race

And meet in the mid heavens the saints who late
Were sighing for His advent—meet them changed
Into the likeness of your nobler state
And round your common Prince in order ranged.

LXXIV. *A LAST REQUEST.*

MEANWHILE, dear spirits, you within the veil
And we who in the outer court abide
Coöperating cannot wholly fail
To see the victory turning to our side.

Lift us above ourselves, and let us see
Things spiritual with an eye so clear,
That they to us realities may be
Compared with the material phantoms here ;

And deep within us let the body grow
Which to your piercing sight is always plain ;
Weave us a perisprite as pure as snow,
To make the mortal loss immortal gain.

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MINOR POEMS

ON THE

SPIRITUAL BODY.



SISTER ALICE'S BIRTHDAY.

MOTHER.

JUST a year to-day, my children, since our gentle
Alice died,
Scarcely sobbed to feel life ebbing, scarcely at the
severance sigh'd,
Only whispered, 'Death is welcome : early into port
I glide.'

CHILDREN.

Tell us, mother darling, tell us, for you used to tell
such things,
Did the angels come to waft her hence on radiant
mounting wings ?
Is it true the soul in dying into starry distance springs ?

Bright and blue-eyed was the youngest of the children
there who spake,
Sitting by the rose and violet bordered grave—let
fall the rake
And the spade he brought with sisters for the mould
and blossoms' sake :
And a meek and earnest maiden with a stream of
flaxen hair,
And a look of love and wonder, pressed the gentle
mother there
With a host of questions subtle as a childish heart
may share.

EDITH.

Shall we ever see our sister ? Will the form that lies
below
Rise in spring-time like a crocus flaming through the
melted snow ?
Shall we look into her face and know that it is Alice,
know ?
How can sister be in heaven, yet in this grave-garden
stay ?
How far is it hence to heaven—is it very far away ?
How long will the soul and body, severed, to unite
delay ?
Do you think that Alice sees us, hears us, rests beside
us still ?
Can she come at early morning to our chamber if she
will,
Like the glorious shafts of sunlight blazing on the
window-sill ?

Has she any form and feature ? Is she in fine raiment
drest,
Like the girls at first Communion, or the marble saints
at rest ?
Has she any Eden lilies to adorn her azure vest ?

Could my eager arms embrace her ? Could I hold
her ivory hand ?
Can a spirit be encircled, tied, by any mortal band ?
If she spoke her spirit-language, mother, could I under-
stand ?

WILFRID.

Here a brother somewhat older interrupted Edith's
speech :
Don't you know, dear, what around us all the well-
kept tomb-stones teach ?
Alice has not gained the prize yet—she has yet the
goal to reach.

She must wait till Christ in glory will return and bid
the tomb
Yield up all the dust immortal buried in the vaulted
gloom ;
Then, and not before, the sunbeams sister's body will
illumine.

EDITH.

Never, never can I, Wilfrid, think that what you say
is true :
Alice wait through Time's long winter till the spring
shall burst anew !
Is she not alive this moment, active, whole as I or
you ?

Then the gentle mother speaking, interposed in this
debate,
Overawed them by her wisdom, charmed with looks
of love sedate,
And her thoughts without an effort clothed in language
simply great.

MOTHER.

Deep within us, and pervading all the fibres of our
frame,
Spreads another body, dear ones, subtle as a lambent
flame,
Which of old the great Apostle did the Spirit-body
name.

Death, whose hand will tear asunder all the structure
lithe and fine
Of the matter-body, cannot pass beyond a certain
line ;
He can only free and quicken man's interior form
divine.

Strikes he into dust ? Yet also he exclaims ' Awake,
Arise ! '

Wrenches all away ? Yet also in his hands he brings
the prize.

Closes up life's gates ? He also opes the portals of
the skies.

As the water in the desert gushing from the rocky
bed,

Shot across the granite levels, tumbled o'er the moun-
tain head,

By a hundred minor streamlets into force and splen-
dour fed :

So the Spirit-body, leaping from the death-struck feet
of clay,

Will the laws of its own nature in its second birth
obey,

Bursting into life from death and out of darkness into
day.

Let it go—the bloom, the beauty, earth to earth and
dust to dust :

Alice rises at this moment from the sepulchre's cold
crust ;

In a thousand shapes she rises, rise and change for
ever must.

She who shone so bright among us, bounding o'er
life's primrose plain,

Now she helps to paint the blossom, sparkle in the
summer rain,

Lade the vine with purple fruit, and fill the peasant's
sheaf and wain.

Never will those atoms, gathered into her material
frame,

Meet again as heretofore and be, as some pretend, the
same ;

Countless other living beings portions of her substance
claim.

But her own, her Spirit-body, that is safe, intact,
entire ;

Swifter than the spark electric, brighter than the
Northern fire,

With her soul informed, the organ of her thought, love,
and desire.

Even while I speak, my children, I believe that she is
nigh :

To the spirits all is ether, to the ransomed earth is
sky.

If God willed it, we could see her hovering, glancing,
standing by.

Patience, sweet ones, yet a little we shall join the
happy dead ;

Fleeting Time at last will bring you to the Christian's
dying bed :

There the mortal shell will burst, and there the soul
her pinions spread.

There the resurrection triumphs, there the man is
made complete ;

Like his former self, yet unlike, for a new existence
meet,

Perfect as a slow-formed crystal, and of novel powers
the seat.

There the Saviour comes in glory, flashing on the
nascent life

Of the spirit disentrained of its human doubt and
strife,

With its store of hallowed memories and its hopes
ecstatic rife.

Do not seek it ; do not shun it ; take its sting by
faith away ;

Death is welcome, death is lovely, death is really man's
birth-day :

Would you strip it of its terrors ? all you have to do
is, pray.

Pray, and ask the dear departed, such as Alice, to be
nigh,
Watching o'er your tangled pathways from the bosom
of their sky,
Which, in fact, is all around you, not illimitably high

Come, my children, let us homeward, for the dews of
eve are chill;
Let us sink like fading sunlight into God's o'erclouded
will,
Waiting till the fires of morning all His promises fulfil.

'THEY SHALL GATHER TOGETHER HIS ELECT.'

WHAT Afghan birds of radiant dyes
That in the sultry forests sing—
What plants that 'neath their watery skies
Down in the depths of ocean spring—

What coral growths and zoophytes there—
What gold and silver divers fleet—
What flowers that make savannas fair,
And charge the winds with perfume sweet—

What living gems that strew the heath
And fringe the banks, and gird the wells
With beauty, and—the cliffs beneath—
What shining sea-washed tropic shells,

Can to the musing mind convey
An image of the marshalled ranks
Of Spirit-bodies that one day
Will spread through heaven their widening flanks,

And, veiling not the ardent sun,
Transparent in the ether glow,
Descend to earth, and close in one
Communion with the saints below !

SONNETS.

I. 'CAN THIS BE DEATH?'

I HAD a dream. Methought I saw the Soul,
With all her grand affections full in bloom,
High thoughts and noble aims. Upon the tomb
She stood on tiptoe. Meekness marked the whole
Of her sublime devotion. On the goal
Of life she gazed—of life in amplest room,
Replete with wonders and exempt from gloom.
Then nearer to her rosy feet I stole,
And found the tomb a corpse of fairest mould,
The unlike likeness of the Soul—so pale,
So motionless, and growing deadly cold.
Some instinct would not let my heart bewail.
The soul was mounting slowly. *She* was hale,
And in immortal youth already old.

II. *THE SOUL'S DYNAMICS.*

THE dancing grains of glittering sand will fly
In clouds irregular if rude winds whirl,
But move in forms of perfect symmetry
When music's notes with gentlest cadence stir,
And settle into shapes as soft as fur,
Obedient to the laws of harmony—
The rhythmic sequences that never err,
And which the soul's dynamics underlie.¹
Let heavenly music ever round us play;
Let airs angelic—breathings from above—
Control our Spirit-bodies to obey
The inspirations of the mystic Dove,
Their structure edify, their movements sway
To love's harmonious results of love.

III. *DISORGANISED INTELLIGENCE.*

IF death were loss in any sense—if sleep
Crept o'er the spirit in those higher spheres
And held it down in torpor—if for years
Untold it waited, tranced in slumber deep
Without a bodily frame in which to keep
The festival of saints and angel-peers,
Without the solace e'en of grateful tears
O'er sins imperfectly bewept to weep—

¹ *Tremadoc Sermons*, by Rev. H. N. Grimley, p. 8

If eye, and ear, and limb, and sense must wait
Their bliss until the soul, from dreams set free,
Shall move in blank procession through the gate
Of heaven at last unclosed, and seek through sea
And land its old, old bones,—what preachers state
Were but a jumble and a mockery.

IV. DEATH AND THE SCULPTOR.

THE sculptor with his mallet struck the brow
Of that imposing statue he had made
And perfected, and wrought so life-like—now
It wanted only breath. He tapped and said,
'Speak!' Yet it spoke not. Death is not afraid
To strike the pallid corpse and say, 'Live thou,
Come forth, rise, speak, mount gloriously, arrayed
In gifts which marble death with life endow!'
O Death, the angel who Saint Peter led
From prison played a part just like thine own,
For thou dost burst the dungeons of the dead
And freest thine own captives from their stone.
See iron gates before thee open spread,
And Spirit-bodies suddenly full grown!

V. *THE LORD'S GRAVECLOTHES.*

GENTLY and mightily the Lord withdrew
His Spirit-body from the linen clothes
That swathed His lifeless limbs : and when He rose
The napkin which enwrapped His forehead too
Lay undisturbed ; and well the Apostles knew
That He had slipt His cerements—He who knows
No bonds but such as may be self-imposed—
And in their souls His Godhead's greatness grew.
O gentle in Thy first and second birth,
O gentle in Thy cradle and Thy grave,
Thou sufferest more than doest man to save :
O draw us gently from this coil of earth,
The bands that swathe our hearts are something
worth :
Withdraw us as Thou didst Thyself, we crave.¹

VI. *THE BIRD AND THE SPIRIT-BODY.*

SWEET bird, who warblest in the cedar height,
The currents of thy blood are not like ours,
For thou art gifted with dilating powers
Most marvellous, and drinkest in thy flight
The waves of ether rolled in gentle might
Through all the labyrinth of arterial bowers,
And valves, and cellules. Thou canst float for
hours
Cradled, thyself half air, in cloud and light.

¹ 'His "Spiritual" Body has withdrawn from the cerements of His "Natural" Body—gently—mightily.'—Rev. A. Beard's *Parable of the Graveclothes*.

And thinking thus of thee, ethereal thing,
And listening to thy voice amidst the pine,
I cry as one enchanted, 'Sing, O sing
Unto my heart in minstrelsy divine
Of that blithe Spirit-body which will wing
Its way at last with plume elate as thine.'

VII. *A TRUER TRUTH.*

THE truth that Paul delivered is o'ergrown
With rank tradition, but the hour is nigh
When isles that in perennial summer lie,
And icy tracts where arctic tempests moan,
And bamboo plains within the torrid zone,
And mission ships that in all waters ply,
And darkling tribes that for the true faith sigh
And aspirations after science own,
A truer resurrection truth shall know—
That death from death a double life will save,
A body from the body will set free—
That mortal sowers in the furrow sow
The husk that mingles with earth, air, and wave,
But do 'not sow the body that shall be.'

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